Public invited to meetings about changes to state opioid prescribing rules
First meeting is Sept. 20 in Tumwater – “virtual” feedback also welcome

OLYMPIA -- The Washington State Department of Health is hosting a series of seven meetings across the state to help battle Washington’s ongoing opioid epidemic. The meetings will gather feedback from the public, stakeholders, and medical providers as the agency prepares to develop rules to implement changes to opioid prescribing and prescription monitoring, as required in Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1427.

The new law requires the boards and commissions overseeing the health care professions allowed to prescribe opioids – medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, nursing, and podiatry – to develop and implement rules for prescribing opioid medications. As part of this effort, they may also expand and revise their existing opioid prescribing rules for chronic non-cancer pain.

The law also requires DOH’s Prescription Monitoring Program to provide an overdose notification system for medical providers by providing access to emergency department data regarding opioid prescribing and prescription monitoring. It requires DOH to provide facilities and medical provider groups with data to improve prescribing practices.

The meetings will focus on the rule development process, giving stakeholders and the public an opportunity to learn about and give input to the department, boards and commissions for their use in writing the rules. The public may provide comments in person, by email, in writing, or online. The Sept. 20 meeting is set for 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Capital Event Center, 6005 Tyee Drive S.W., Tumwater. Other meetings are planned for six other locations.

The new law follows Governor Inslee’s 2016 Executive Order identifying opioids as a critical public health issue. Find information about future meetings on the Department of Health’s opioid prescribing page.
The Department of Health website (doh.wa.gov) is your source for a healthy dose of information. Also, find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

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