

Appendix C. Pain Contracts/Treatment Agreements

The North Carolina Medical Board (NCMB), in its “[Policy for the Use of Opiates for the Treatment of Pain](#)”, recommends the use of written informed consent and a treatment agreement when treating chronic pain with opioid medications. Agreements, or “pain contracts”, are signed by both the provider and patient and identify the goals of treatment.

The agreement typically addresses the patient’s responsibility to use the medication(s) safely, to only obtain opioids from one physician/practice, and to undergo periodic drug testing, and the physician’s responsibility to be available or have coverage for unforeseen problems and to prescribe scheduled refills. The agreement should include guidelines about prescription refills, how monitoring will occur (e.g. random pill counts and urine drug screening), and conditions under which drug therapy may be discontinued (e.g., violation of agreement).

A sample pain agreement can be found in CCNC’s Chronic Pain initiative toolkit for primary care providers (pages 19-20): <https://www.communitycarenc.org/media/related-downloads/pl-toolkit-pcps.pdf>