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Press Release



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Governor Hassan's Statement on Signing Bipartisan Legislation Requiring Updated Prescribing Rules for Opioids

CONCORD – Governor Maggie Hassan issued the following statement after signing House Bill 1423, legislation that she proposed in November as part of a comprehensive strategy to fight opioid abuse, requiring all prescribing boards to update prescribing rules for opioids:

“While opioids can play an important role in pain management and our healthcare system, we know that the heroin and opioid crisis stems in part from the overuse, misuse and abuse of addictive prescription opioids. In order to prevent the overprescribing of opioids, we have been working to improve provider training and to update the rules for prescribers, with the boards of medicine, nursing and dental examiners taking important steps forward with their own updated rules.

“House Bill 1423 builds on those efforts by requiring the boards governing all prescribers to adopt updated, permanent rules this year and by providing a uniform, statewide standard. I thank Representative Rosenwald, Representative Sherman, the New Hampshire Medical Society and our physicians for their leadership on this issue, and I am proud to sign this bipartisan bill into law in order to build on our efforts to prevent the overprescribing of opioids.”

House Bill 1423 builds on emergency rules that boards of medicine, nursing and dental examiners put in place in collaboration with Governor Hassan to ensure that best practices are followed in prescribing opioids, and the boards of medicine and nursing have been working to establish permanent rules. Beginning in September, the new law mandates the use of the prescription drug monitoring program and requires all boards governing prescribing to have new rules establishing standards for assessing the need for opioids, the risk for abuse and educating patients. It also requires boards to set standards for limiting the amount of days for an opioid prescription obtained in an emergency room to ensure follow-up care for patients.

The new law also contains exceptions for opioids prescribed for cancer patients, patients with terminal conditions or patients in long-term non-rehabilitative care settings, such as nursing homes.

Governor Hassan has outlined and consistently worked to implement a comprehensive strategy to support law enforcement and strengthen prevention, treatment and recovery in combating the crisis, including calling a special session of the legislature last November. In addition to House Bill 1423, the Governor has signed legislation to increase the penalties for the illegal sale and distribution of fentanyl, to limit prior authorizations for outpatient substance abuse treatment and to improve the state's prescription drug monitoring program. The Governor also fought to reauthorize the bipartisan New Hampshire Health Protection Program, which has provided substance misuse and behavioral health services to thousands of Granite Staters, and she has revised licensing requirements to make it easier for providers to open treatment facilities, worked to increase the safe and effective use of Narcan, and launched a statewide substance misuse hotline to help connect individuals with resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Over the course of the next several weeks, Governor Hassan will also sign bipartisan legislation to limit insurance companies' prior authorization requirements for in-patient hospital stays, to expand the use of the prescription drug monitoring program and to provide \$5 million in additional resources for prevention, treatment and recovery programs and supportive housing. The legislature has also heeded Governor Hassan's call to return next week to consider additional funding for law enforcement, expanding statewide the successful Operation Granite Hammer model that she helped launched last year.

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