

HOUSE BILL 1501

By Hakeem

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 53
and Title 63, relative to opioids.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 63, Chapter 1, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Prior to issuing an initial prescription of a Schedule II controlled substance or another opioid pain reliever that is a prescription drug in a course of treatment for acute or chronic pain, and prior to issuing the third prescription of the course of treatment, a prescribing healthcare practitioner shall discuss with the patient, or the patient's parent or guardian if the patient is under eighteen (18) years of age and is not an emancipated minor, the risks associated with the drugs being prescribed, including, but not limited to:

(1) The risks of addiction and overdose associated with opioid drugs and the dangers of taking opioid drugs with alcohol, benzodiazepines, and other central nervous system depressants;

(2) The reasons why the prescription is necessary;

(3) Alternative treatments that may be available; and

(4) Risks associated with the use of the drugs being prescribed, specifically that opioids are highly addictive, even when taken as prescribed; that there is a risk of developing a physical or psychological dependence on the controlled substance; and that the risks of taking more opioids than prescribed, or mixing sedatives, benzodiazepines, or alcohol with opioids, can result in fatal respiratory depression. The practitioner shall include a note in the patient's

medical record that the patient, or the patient's parent or guardian if the patient is under eighteen (18) years of age and is not an emancipated minor, has discussed with the practitioner the risks of developing a physical or psychological dependence on the controlled substance and alternative treatments that may be available.

(b) This section does not apply to:

(1) A prescription for a patient who is currently in active treatment for cancer, is receiving hospice care from a licensed hospice or palliative care facility, or is a resident of a long-term care facility; or

(2) Medications that are prescribed for use in the treatment of substance abuse or opioid dependence.

(c) This section does not supersede, but is supplemental to, other informed consent requirements applicable to the prescribing of Schedule II controlled substances in this state.

(d) As used in this section, "prescribing healthcare practitioner" means an individual licensed under this title and authorized to prescribe medications.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.