


**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
NURSING CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION  
PROCEDURE**

<b>Title:</b>	Short-Term Analgesic Use	<b>Number:</b>	W41.01
<b>Reference:</b>	<a href="#">RCW 18.130.160</a> <a href="#">RCW 18.130.175</a> <a href="#">WAC 246-840-750</a> through <a href="#">246-840-780</a>		
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<b>Effective Date:</b>	March 8, 2019	<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	March 2019
<b>Supersedes:</b>	W10.01		
<b>Approved:</b>	 Tracy Rude, LPN Chair Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission		

**PURPOSE:**

Acute pain may occur in those with substance use disorders because of trauma, surgery, etc. Therefore, Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS) supports appropriate pain management for nurses with short-term needs for narcotic analgesics.

**PROCEDURE:**

- I. Nurse's Responsibility to Report
  - A. The nurse will notify WHPS and their Work Site Monitor (WSM) immediately if a healthcare provider has or will be prescribing narcotic analgesic medication.
  - B. Require the prescriber to fax a completed Prescription Information Form to WHPS.
  - C. The nurse will immediately cease practice.
  
- II. WHPS Responsibilities
  - A. Review the Prescription Information Form, including the reason the medication was prescribed, frequency and dose, specific date and time of anticipated last dose, and prescriber's name and contact information.
  - B. Direct the nurse to call WHPS to report when they have taken their last prescribed dose. Verify with the nurse that they have taken all doses and no medication remains. If any medication remains, WHPS directs the nurse to return it to the prescriber or appropriate take-back location.

- C. Contact the WSM to confirm that the nurse is not practicing direct patient care. Inform the WSM that the nurse may resume direct patient care practice 24 hours after taking the last dose, if the employer and WHPS approve.
- D. WHPS will inform the WSM when the nurse has reported last use, and if agreed, may resume direct patient care. Drug test results will be available in approximately one week. The WSM should remain vigilant for any signs of impairment.
- E. Schedule a drug test (standard panel + EtG) at least 72 hours after last dose. (It takes at least 72 hours for most analgesics with addiction potential to clear from the body; WHPS may adjust the testing windows depending on the medication.)