

# Environmental Scan #1

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December 12, 2018

## 1 Article: “Physicians concerned about new opioid pharmacy rules”

Cole, LaDyrian. “Physicians concerned about new opioid pharmacy rules”  
<https://bit.ly/2Eg2zed5>

## 2 Summary

The Texas State Board of Pharmacy recently created several new pharmacy prescription regulations that give more responsibility to pharmacists to judge the legitimacy of prescriptions before agreeing to dispense them. For example, if a patient officially resides hundreds of miles away, a pharmacist may interpret this as a red flag. Under the new guidelines, it is appropriate for the pharmacist to call the prescriber and ask for clarification about the diagnosis or indication for which the patient is receiving an opioid prescription. These guidelines were implemented in response to the President’s declaration of the opioid crisis as a Public Health Emergency last year. Physicians in Texas are responding to these changes with concern, believing that these new changes are straining the traditional physician-patient-pharmacist relationship.

## 3 Reflection

I see these new changes as beneficial for both public health and the pharmacy industry.

The opioid crisis is obviously a serious public health problem. Lax healthcare standards are generally believed to contribute to this problem. Before a patient gets an opioid prescription, there are several healthcare workers with whom they come in contact; anywhere along that path, they may be denied access to the drug. Pharmacists serve as the final gatekeeper before a patient gets an opioid medication in their hands—usually believed to be the on-ramp to most opioid addictions. It makes sense to strengthen this checkpoint first.

This transfer of responsibility