

## McDowell, Robert

---

**From:** Emily Adams <emily.adams@ncapa.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 06, 2017 10:23 AM  
**To:** Henderson, Meredith  
**Subject:** [External] NCAPA Public Comment on Draft rules for the utilization of opioids and pain management treatment in workers' compensation claims

**CAUTION:** External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Send all suspicious email as an attachment to report.spam@nc.gov.

**To:** North Carolina Workers' Compensation Opioid Task Force  
**From:** The North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants  
**Subject:** Draft rules for the utilization of opioids and pain management treatment in workers' compensation claims

Dear Chairman Allen,

The North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants (“NCAPA”), a professional association for physician assistants (“PAs”) licensed to practice in North Carolina, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft rules for the utilization of opioids and pain management treatment in Workers' Compensation claims. As providers in North Carolina, PAs understand that the opioid crisis is real, and that our own neighbors are dying every single day from this deadly addiction. PAs want to be part of the solution, and PAs want to ensure that opioids are only prescribed when absolutely necessary.

Physician assistants work to ensure the best possible care for patients in every specialty and setting. Their rigorous medical education, versatility, and commitment to collaborative care help practices function more efficiently while providing increased revenues and enhanced continuity of care. The typical PA treats 3,500 patients and writes 2,600 to 5,200 prescriptions each year and can be found working in virtually every medical and surgical setting. Almost one-third of PAs practice in primary care, primarily family medicine, and another one-third of PAs practice in hospital settings. The remaining PAs practice in an assortment of settings, ranging from community health centers to nursing homes.

Across all specialties, PAs provide medical care and care coordination, increase patient access and contribute to improved quality of care. They are a cost-effective resource for meeting patients’ medical needs by performing physical examinations, diagnosing and treating illnesses, ordering and interpreting lab tests, performing procedures, and assisting in surgery.

With the opioid addiction crisis plaguing communities across the state and nation, NCAPA has welcomed the state's efforts in eradicating this crisis, such as the *STOP Act*. We know that these draft rules and the *STOP Act* will serve as the beginning of many tools that will be added to our health care provider tool boxes in the coming months and years. PAs are eager to continue to play our part in ensuring that safe prescribing practices are used in each and every situation.

As the rulemaking process moves forward for these draft rules, NCAPA will continue to monitor these rules in order to ensure that they are workable in the everyday workplace and contribute to our collective goal of keeping our fellow neighbors alive and healthy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide our input on the Industrial Commission's draft rules. We look forward to serving as a resource for the Commission throughout the rulemaking process. Should you have questions, please contact Emily Adams, NCAPA Executive Director, at 919-479-1995 or [Emily.Adams@ncapa.org](mailto:Emily.Adams@ncapa.org).

Sincerely,

**Emily Adams**  
**Executive Director**  
**NC Academy of Physician Assistants**  
1121 Slater Road, Durham, NC 27703  
919.479.1995, ext 408  
919.479.9726 FAX  
[www.ncapa.org](http://www.ncapa.org)

