



Dear Community Member,

This letter is a way for us, State of the Heart Care, to reach out to our referring physicians, local law enforcement and community to address the growing concerns of the epidemic of drug misuse and diversion. Here at State of the Heart Care we feel compelled to adopt a policy of universal precautions for medication management improving the safety, compliance and engagement for patients, families and staff.

We have always followed Federal, State and local regulations regarding managing medications. Because our communities are faced with a serious opioid problem, we will improve our ability to control medication abuse by those who may have access to medications in the home. Our philosophy is to assure that we relieve our patients' pain but never allow our medications to fall into the hands of those they may harm.

Improving on the guidelines already established, we will be implementing policies and procedures that promote patient and staff safety, adhere to regulations and accreditation standards, and keep patients, caregivers and staff informed.

Elements of Universal Precautions will be:

- Staff Education
- Patient and family education at the time of admission to the hospice program
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach
- Expectations clear up front for all parties
- Establish partnership between the Inter-Disciplinary Team and the patient/family/caregiver
- The Inter-Disciplinary Team will have tools readily available to manage situations proactively, not reactively
- Stewardship to community
- Compliance with the law

On admission, the history will be gathered and an opioid risk tool assessment will be performed. Every patient/POA admitted to State of the Heart Care hospice program will receive education on our safe medication management policy and will sign an Agreement of Safe Pain Medication Use form. Once the risk assessment is



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performed and there is no risk evident, then no further action will occur. The inter-disciplinary team, however, will continue to monitor the situation. If a risk is identified, the patient will continue to step two of the process. If not compliant with the step two plan of care in place, then step three will be implemented. Serious effort to resolve the problem will be made by the Inter-Disciplinary Team. Continued non-compliance could potentially lead to the discharge of a patient from hospice services for cause determined by our Medical Director and Inter-Disciplinary Team.

On our website, you will find the following forms meant to educate and inform the public about resources available within our community:

- Recovery and Support Services
- Opioid Risk Tool
- Agreement for Safe Medication Use

To view these forms, please visit <https://stateoftheheartcare.org/employee/>

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