



State of West Virginia *Board of Medicine*

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August 9, 2016

Office of the WV Attorney General
Attorney General Patrick Morrissey
State Capitol Complex
Building 1, Room E-26
Charleston, WV 25305

Attorney General Morrissey:

The West Virginia Board of Medicine congratulates you on your ongoing efforts to bring education and understanding to our citizens and medical professionals throughout the state regarding the improper prescribing and abuse of opioids drugs. For over a decade our state has been at the top if not led the nation in prescription drug overdose deaths. During this time period, over 5,000 of our friends, neighbors and colleagues have died as a result of the misuse and abuse of opioids. Thousands more have suffered and continue to deal with the effects of opioid addiction. Few, if any, have been unaffected in some way by this scourge.

For the past 16 years the Board of Medicine has squarely confronted this issue through the establishment and enforcement of regulation, policy, treatment and education of its almost 8,000 licensees. We welcome and support the recent Best Practice Plan campaign of the attorney general's office to increase the use of non-opioid alternatives as a first line treatment for acute and chronic pain thereby reducing the general use of opioids. Such best practices are in turn reflected in the 2016 Center for Disease Control Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain as well as the mandated continuing medical education requirements for our licensees.

Only through such concerted and combined efforts will we begin to impact the opioid epidemic. We appreciate the opportunity to participate and support in your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert C. Knittle".

Robert C. Knittle