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To: Coriell, Scott
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Opiate Prescription Limits Approved
New Limits Will be Strictest in America

Montpelier - Gov. Peter Shumlin today applauded approval of Vermont's new rules placing the strictest limits in America on the number of powerful, addictive painkillers that can be dispensed by medical professionals.

"In 2015, enough painkillers were handed out in Vermont to give every man, woman, and child a bottle of 100 pills," Gov. Shumlin said. "That needs to change, and I am proud that medical professionals and others are working to make progress here in Vermont. These new rules will solidify that progress, helping to ensure that fewer Vermonters are sent home with enough painkillers to set off a lifetime of horrible addiction. I want to thank Health Commissioner Harry Chen for his great work on this issue."

The new limits give guidance to prescribers and set legal limits on the dosage and number of opioid painkillers that may be prescribed. For some minor procedures, the proposal calls for a limit of between nine and 12 pills.

The Governor called for the limits in his 2016 State of the State Address, and the Legislature passed a bill giving the Health Commissioner the discretion to set the limits. In October, the Vermont Health Department proposed the new limits. Today, the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules approved them unanimously with bipartisan support.

The limits go into effect July 1, 2017. They were supported by the Vermont Medical Society and others.

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