



STATE OF IOWA

IOWA DENTAL BOARD

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

JILL STUECKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Memorandum

To: Iowa Dentists
From: Iowa Dental Board
Date: 2/19/16
Re: Memo Regarding Prescription Drug Counseling

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is the federal agency tasked with investigating significant transportation accidents. As part of their efforts to reduce future accidents, the NTSB asked us to share with Iowa dentists the results of a study, *"Drug Use Trends in Aviation: Assessing the Risk of Pilot Impairment."* While the focus of the study was aviation, the NTSB issued recommendations to health care professionals as it relates to all modes of transportation.

Evidence suggests there is an increase in the use of over-the-counter and prescription drugs by members of the public in attempts to remedy medical conditions. The results of the study suggest that risk levels associated with various medications are not accurately being communicated to individuals. The study concludes that the lack of information is not limited to aviators.

Specifically, those without appropriate counseling may find it difficult to fully understand the risks associated with opioids and the effect they may have on one's ability to safely operate a car or any other type of vehicle.

The NTSB recommends that dentists routinely discuss with patients their medical condition(s), and the effects that these conditions and prescribed or recommended medication(s) may have on one's ability to safely operate vehicles. Effective communication of these risks may reduce future accidents by allowing patients to make informed decisions about their activities while taking medication.

For further information, you can view the safety study at <http://www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1401.pdf>.