

State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs

HDA'S POSITION

HDA supports continued federal funding of state prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs). With states across the country still facing record budget deficits, federal funding of PDMPs is critical. A PDMP is an electronic database that collects statewide dispensing and prescribing data on specified substances. The data is held by a state regulatory, administrative or law enforcement agency. PDMPs are used by states as a tool to identify and prevent prescription drug abuse and diversion. Pharmaceutical distributors, while not prescribing or dispensing controlled substances, work nationwide with state and federal officials and industry partners to ensure product availability while minimizing opportunities for diversion.

Currently, there are two federal sources of funding for PDMPs: the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (HRPDMP) and the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act (NASPER). HRPDMP is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice and provides for planning, implementation, and enhancement grants. NASPER is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and funds PDMP databases.

ISSUE

The dramatic rise of prescription drug abuse has achieved epidemic proportions across the country in the last 10 years. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015 more than 33,000 people died from an opioid overdose compared to 28,000 in 2014. That number rose further, with overdoses involving opioids killing more than 42,000 people in 2016.¹ Other commonly abused prescription drugs include tranquilizers, stimulants and sedatives. To mitigate the possible diversion or abuse of controlled substances, PDMPs track specific drugs through the patient, prescriber or dispenser to ensure that their prescribing and dispensing is appropriate. The White House Office of National Drug Policy considers PDMPs critical to improving public health.² However, the number of prescribers using PDMPs remains low, as not all states mandate PDMP use. PDMP administrators, state and federal health officials, professional organizations and legislators are constantly examining ways to increase prescriber use of PDMPs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As of 2017, 49 states have operational PDMPs with the capacity to receive and distribute controlled substance prescription information to authorized users, including Guam and the District of Columbia. Missouri was the last state to authorize the creation of a PDMP in July 2017, but it is still not fully operational.

1- "Data Overview: Overview of an epidemic," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention, last modified July 18, 2017, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/index.html>.

2- Reilly, Cynthia, "Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs: Evidence-based practices to optimize prescriber use," December 16, 2016, <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2016/12/prescription-drug-monitoring-programs>.

HDA is the national association representing primary healthcare distributors, the vital link between the nation's pharmaceutical manufacturers and healthcare providers. Each business day, HDA member companies ensure that over 15 million prescription medicines and healthcare products are delivered safely and efficiently to more than 200,000 pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics and others nationwide. HDA and its members work daily to provide value and achieve cost savings, an estimated \$42 billion each year to our nation's healthcare system.