



Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

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Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) are used by prescribers and pharmacists to make safe prescribing decisions for patients in pain. They also can help identify patients who might be at-risk for abusing opioids, diverting the drugs onto others, or “doctor-shopping,” a tactic used by patients to obtain prescription drugs from multiple prescribers or dispensers.

In this chapter, you will find information about Colorado’s PDMP and why it is an important tool that helps improve patient care while curbing prescription drug misuse and abuse. Use this section if you are:

- Interested in learning about the PDMP, what information it contains, and who can access it;
- Working with providers to encourage their use of the PDMP;
- Interested in the state’s PDMP policies and oversight; and/or
- Working as a community to prevent diversion and abuse.

The PDMP and How It Works

The PDMP is a highly secure electronic database that tracks prescriptions for controlled medications including opioids such as oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet) and hydrocodone (Vicodin), sedatives, and stimulants. It includes information about who filled the prescription, who prescribed it, when it was filled, how many days’ supply, and which pharmacy filled the prescription. The Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) maintains Colorado’s PDMP.

In Colorado, pharmacies upload data about medications they have dispensed to the PDMP every regular business day. Not all prescriptions are tracked – Colorado’s PDMP only tracks medications that have a potential for abuse and that could cause dependence or addiction as determined by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). These medications are known as controlled substances

Medical providers such as physicians or their registered delegates are able to log into the PDMP if they would

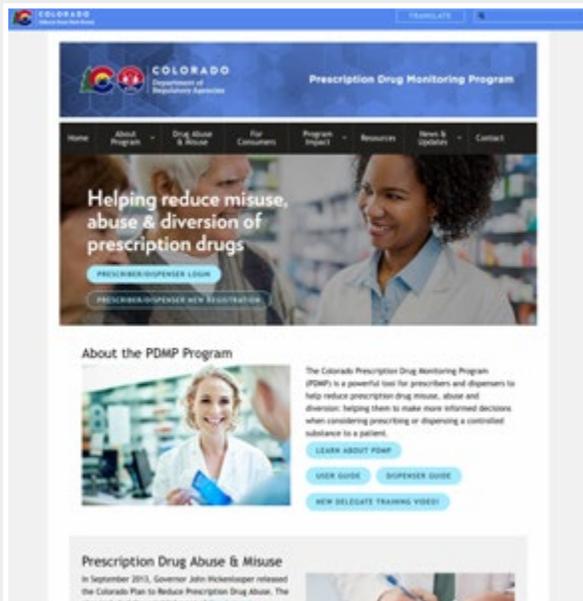
like to know about a patient’s history of controlled medication use. Providers are not required to check the PDMP, but instead use their discretion when considering the safety of a controlled medication prescription.

If a patient is taking an unusually high or unsafe amount of a controlled medication, a doctor can begin a discussion about safe medication use. In some cases, checking the PDMP might help identify a patient with a substance use disorder who needs help or someone who is illegally obtaining and diverting medication.

Pharmacists also can check the PDMP, providing an extra layer of protection.

Accessing the PDMP

Because it contains confidential protected health information, access to the PDMP is restricted. Health care professionals who have a DEA license to prescribe controlled medications (such as physicians, dentists,



Information about obtaining PDMP records can be found on DORA's website at www.colorado.gov/pacific/dora-pdmp

and veterinarians), their authorized delegates, and pharmacists have access to the PDMP.

PDMP information may be obtained in other limited cases including: Law enforcement agencies and DORA regulatory boards need a valid court order or subpoena to access the PDMP. Researchers can obtain de-identified data with the permission of the State Board of Pharmacy. Consumers are able to obtain their personal PDMP records. Further information about obtaining PDMP records can be found on DORA's website: www.colorado.gov/pacific/dora-pdmp.

PDMP Oversight

The Colorado State Legislature writes the laws that govern the PDMP. It established the PDMP in 2005, and since then has passed a number of bills intended to improve the program consistent with national best practices.

In 2015, a task force was established to examine issues, opportunities, and weaknesses of the program, and to make recommendations on ways to make the PDMP

a more effective tool to reduce prescription drug abuse in Colorado. The Consortium's PDMP Work Group serves as that task force.

Resources

Colorado PDMP

View the DORA PDMP homepage at www.colorado.gov/pacific/dora-pdmp.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have posted information about PDMPs on its website at www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdmp/states.html.

Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health wrote a policy analysis that includes a discussion of the PDMP. The analysis is available online at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/article/policy-analysis-explores-state-legislation-and-response-opioid-crisis.

Colorado PDMP Legislation

Links to legislation about the PDMP are available on the work group's website, www.corxconsortium.org/pdmp-work-group.

U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency

The Drug Enforcement Agency's list of controlled medications identifies the medications tracked by the PDMP. Those drugs are classified as Schedule II, III, IV, and V controlled substances. You can find information about controlled substances on the DEA's website, www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/schedules.





Provider Education Events

If you are interested in hosting an educational event in your area for health care providers to address topics related to the PDMP, please refer to the Provider Education chapter.

The Consortium's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Work Group

The Consortium's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Work Group serves as the state's task force for issues related to the use and improvement of the PDMP. The work group has played a large role in the development,

integration, and implementation of this program. The work group's goals include increasing provider utilization of the PDMP and facilitating access to the program by integrating it with the state's Health Information Exchanges and the electronic health records databases used by medical providers.

If you have an interest in this area or have questions about this topic, reach out to the program manager at pm@corxconsortium.org. If you would like to join or get more information about the work group, please visit www.corxconsortium.org/pdmp-work-group. You can also join by emailing info@corxconsortium.org.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Work Group Co-Chairs

Jason Hoppe, DO, University of Colorado School of Medicine/UCHealth
University of Colorado Hospital

Colin Benjamin, Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies
Contact: Email pm@corxconsortium.org