



Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center

The Prescription Drug Monitor

November 2014

Volume 6, Issue 4

Brandeis University Announces the Creation of a New Training and Technical Assistance Program

Brandeis University is building upon its work of the past five years as the PDMP Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) and PDMP Clearinghouse/Center of Excellence (COE) to coordinate the work of these two centers into a single PDMP National Training and Technical Assistance Program (TTAP). The TTAP will develop and deliver a comprehensive array of services to improve consistency and alignment among PDMPs, coordination between PDMPs and state and national stakeholders, identify, document, and assess the evidence for PDMP best and promising practices, and assist PDMPs in implementing practices most likely to improve their effectiveness. More information on TTAP will be provided in the coming months.

The Prescription Drug Monitor

The Prescription Drug Monitor newsletter has changed from a quarterly newsletter, with condensed News Briefs in the interceding months, to a bi-monthly newsletter. With the formation of PDMP National Training and Technical Assistance Program (TTAP), we would like your input on the content of the newsletter. As always, we wish to provide a product that is beneficial to our stakeholders. If you have ideas on what you would like to see included in future newsletters, please let us know. As always, if you have information or news items that you believe would be of interest to other readers, please forward to us. Your ideas and news items can be sent to info@pdmpassist.org.

PMIX National meeting

The PMIX Architecture National meeting was held on November 13-14 in Washington, D.C. The primary purpose of the meeting was to establish a governing body for the Architecture. It was organized by members of the PMIX Working Group and facilitated by TTAC through the support of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The Working Group consists of state PDMP administrators representing the interests of states in relation to the interstate data sharing hubs (PMPi, RxCheck, and RxSentry). PDMP representatives from Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Maine, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Washington, and Wisconsin attended this day

and a half meeting. Also attending the meeting were representatives from Accenture, Appriss, BJA, Enterprise Science and Computing (ESAC), Health Information Designs (HID), IJIS Institute, National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), National Governors Association (NGA), Office of the National Coordinator (ONC), Open Networks, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Topics covered at this meeting were the goals and operating procedures for the Governing Body, the status of the existing hubs and the S & I Framework Integration Pilots, enhancements to the PMIX Architecture, data sharing challenges and opportunities, and future activities for the Governing Body. Jean Hall (Working Group Chair, KY) led the meeting discussions. All the attendees participated in the discussions, making this meeting a tremendous success. The governance documents will be posted on the TTAC website when they are finalized. Copies of the agenda and presentations are available on the [TTAC WEBSITE](#).

National Safety Council: Over-the-Counter Pain Medications are More Effective for Acute Pain than Prescribed Painkillers

In October, the National Safety Council (NSC) issued a white paper 'Evidence for the efficacy of pain medications'. This paper is a compilation of research indicating that the over-the-counter medications (i.e., ibuprofen, acetaminophen) are more effective than opioid medications for treating acute pain. The NSC Medical Advisor, Dr. Donald Teater, explains that one measure to determine the effectiveness of a pain medication is the 'number needed to treat' (NNT). He states that effective treatment is achieved when the dose of the medication results in 50% pain relief. A medication with an NNT of 1 indicates that the medication is 100% effective at reducing pain by 50%; so, the lower the NNT, the more effective the medication. Dr. Teater cites research evaluating various pain medications and examining their effectiveness. For example, in postoperative pain treatment, Oxycodone 15 mg has a NNT of 4.6; whereas, Ibuprofen 200 mg in conjunction with acetaminophen 500 mg has an NNT of 1.6. The conclusions drawn from the research are that there are other options to deal with acute pain with fewer side effects. Dr. Teater also states that there are conditions for which opioid medications are the better treatment option (i.e., terminal cancer); emphasizing that treatment options should be discussed with a physician. Read the [WHITE PAPER](#).

Did You Know?

- The Drug Enforcement Administration has developed a website containing various resources for parents, educators and caregivers about drugs. The site includes pictures and descriptions of drugs, drug statistics, trending topics, and consequences of drug use. Visit the [WEBSITE](#).
- The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC) approved recommendations to revise their current medical guidelines to include a questionnaire for examiners to ascertain more information about a driver's condition and medications. Based on the information, the

examiner would then indicate whether or not the medications would adversely affect the driver's performance. The recommendations were based on research by FMCSA's Medical Expert Panel which showed that opioid and stimulant use increases driving risk. Read the [ARTICLE](#).

- Consumer Reports published an article describing five signs indicating that your doctor might be an over-prescriber. The signs are: 1) You're prescribed multiple drugs and aren't sure why, 2) You're given a prescription for every symptom, 3) The office is full of pharmaceutical logos, 4) You get antibiotics for the common cold, and 5) Your doctor doesn't ask about nonprescription drugs and supplements. Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) issued a report, based on 2012 CDC data, indicating that narcotic pain medication deaths dropped 5% since 2011. Additionally, the data show that heroin overdose deaths have increased 35% during the same timeframe. In the USA Today article, an addiction specialist relates that his patients informed him that heroin has taken the place of opioids as they became less available and more expensive. The article includes a quote from Michael Botticelli, Acting Director of ONDCP, contradicting that claim; 'Fewer than 5% of prescription painkiller abusers move on to heroin, and the proportion of deaths from the drug is much smaller.' Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved another tamper resistant opioid. Embeda has abuse-deterrent properties that block some of the euphoric effects of the drug when crushed. Read the [ARTICLE](#). The FDA has also approved an extended-release hydrocodone product, Hysingla ER, which has abuse-deterrent properties. Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has developed two programs to facilitate interactions between physicians and their patients. Motivational Interviewing, a course with CME credit, helps the physician build their skills in interviewing patients. Motivational Interviewing Patient Simulation is an online program for the physician to practice their interviewing techniques. The goal of both programs is to assist the physician in addressing a patient's health risk behaviors. Visit the [WEBSITE](#).
- The American Academy of Neurology issued a policy statement that states that the risks of opioids outweigh the benefits in the treatment of chronic pain. The policy also recommends several best practices; such as, checking the PDMP and referring chronic pain patients to specialists. Read the [POLICY](#).
- Pharmacy Times reports that many chain drug stores will not dispense hydrocodone prescription refills after October 6, 2014 even though the Drug Enforcement Administration rules permit it. The article cites as the possible reasons as issues with pharmacy quality and safety processes, payer reimbursement policies and conflicting state laws. The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) developed a 'Dear Patient' letter for pharmacists to give to their patients with existing refills. The letter explains the regulatory changes and recommends that patients contact their physicians for a new prescription. Read the [ARTICLE](#).

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued a report about emergency department (ED) visits involving synthetic cannabinoids. The report shows that ED visits increased from 11,406 in 2010 to 28,531 in 2011. The report also provides use trends by gender and age. Read the [REPORT](#).
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PDMPs News and Updates

- **Alaska** – Voters approved a measure that legalizes recreational marijuana use in Alaska. The state will create a marijuana control board to draft rules, within 9 months, on how marijuana businesses will operate. The bill passed with 52% of the vote and is expected to become law by February or March 2015. Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- **California** – The Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an ordinance requiring drug makers to set up programs for the disposal of expired and unused medications. The Board felt that the pharmaceutical companies should share the responsibility for the ‘impact, possible negative impacts, of their products.’ Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- **Colorado** - Tia Stakely, PDMP Administrator, has decided to explore other career opportunities. Assuming the role of administrator is Janina Rivera. We wish Tia continued success and we welcome Janina to the PDMP community.
- **District of Columbia** – Voters approved a measure making the possession of less than 2 oz. of marijuana and up to 3 marijuana plants legal for personal use. However, the law will not take effect until it is reviewed by the U.S. Congress. It does not allow for the sale of marijuana, as that topic is left up to the D.C. Council. Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- **Kentucky** – The Commonwealth of Kentucky has filed a civil suit against the manufacturers of OxyContin (Purdue Pharma). In the suit, Purdue Pharma is accused of Medicaid fraud, false advertising, creating a public nuisance, and unjust enrichment. Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway said that Purdue can avoid the trial by making a ‘very, very significant’ settlement offer. Read the [ARTICLE](#).
- **Mississippi** - Deb Brown is retiring from the Mississippi Board of Pharmacy. Dana Crenshaw will take over as the new PDMP Administrator. Deb will remain with the Board as a consultant during the transition period. We wish Deb a happy retirement and welcome Dana.
- **Missouri** – The ACT Missouri group has published a fact sheet endorsing a bill to create a PDMP in Missouri. The flyer details the prescription drug abuse problem in Missouri and touts the benefits of PDMPs. View the [FACT SHEET](#).
- **New Jersey** – The New Jersey Attorney General has filed 50 disciplinary actions on registrants for indiscriminate prescribing or dispensing of controlled substances. The actions have resulted in the revocation or temporary suspension of 26 state controlled substance registrations. Read the [PRESS RELEASE](#).
- **New York** – The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s Rx STAT Program is a public health and public safety initiative analyzes government data on misuse and

abuse. By analyzing that data in a timely fashion, they seek to identify emerging issues and reduce the incidence of overdose deaths. Their analysis has shown that opioid overdose rates were three times higher in Staten Island when compared to other parts of New York City. Read the [ARTICLE](#).

- **Pennsylvania** – The Governor signed a bill fully implementing his Healthy Pennsylvania plan. This bill establishes the Achieving Better Care by Monitoring All Prescriptions Program (ABC-MAP) database within the Department of Health. The previous PDMP tracked only Schedule II controlled substances and was housed at the Attorney General’s Office. Read the [PRESS RELEASE](#).
- **Oregon** – Voters approved, by a 54% to 46% margin, a measure legalizing recreational marijuana. The measure, which takes effect in July 2015, requires the liquor commission to license and regulate marijuana businesses to produce, process, wholesale, and sell marijuana. Read the [ARTICLE](#).