

Welcome to the National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws (NAMSDL) Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) Update. Through this update, we hope to relay states' efforts regarding PMPs and related legislative, regulatory, and program updates. As part of our work with states to address alcohol and other drug issues through laws, policies, and programs, NAMSDL assists states with efforts to address the diversion of, abuse of, misuse of, and addiction to prescription drugs. We hope you find this update useful and we welcome your feedback, suggestions, and ideas.

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1. Materials from 2007 National Prescription Monitoring Conference Available

On December 6-7, 2007, NAMSDL held the 2007 National Conference on State Prescription Monitoring Programs in Washington, D.C. (See the attached agenda.) Power points and other materials from the Conference are now available on the new NAMSDL website at www.namsdl.org. Once on the homepage, click on "4th National Conference on State Prescription Monitoring Programs".

2. Enhancement Grant Funding Can Now be Used for Operational Expenses

BJA has decided to allow up to 25% of enhancement grant funding under the Harold Rogers Prescription Monitoring Grant Program to be used towards operational expenses. To help answer questions about the issue, BJA staff have posted a FAQ on the BJA website which can be accessed at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/prescripdrugs.html>.

3. Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs Surveys State PMP Officials

The Alliance of States has gathered data from state PMP officials regarding the results and effectiveness of state PMPs. The collected information is detailed in a November 30, 2007 report entitled "An Assessment of State Prescription Monitoring Program Effectiveness and Results". Some of the key findings from the data as stated on page 20 of the report are:

- PMP Usage is Increasing.
- PMP Usage is Widespread by Healthcare.
- PMPs Do Not Inhibit Physician Prescribing of Controlled Substances for Legitimate Medical Conditions.

Questions about the report and its content should be directed to Jim Giglio, President, Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs, jgg01@health.state.ny.us, (518) 402-0707.

4. National Reports and Surveys Highlight Prescription Drug Abuse, Addiction and Diversion, PMPs and E-Prescribing

2007 Monitoring the Future Results

University of Michigan, December 11, 2007

<http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/data/07data.html#2007data-drugs>

On December 11, the University of Michigan released results from the latest Monitoring the Future survey, which tracks attitudes and drug use rates of 8th, 10th and 12th graders across the nation. The survey found a gradual decline in the proportions reporting use of illicit drugs with the exception of prescription drugs, over-the-counter cough medicines and MDMA (ecstasy).

State Issue Brief on Methadone Overdose Deaths

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, June 2007

http://www.nasadaad.org/resource.php?base_id=1159

Used as a medication since the 1960's to treat heroin addicts and increasingly becoming a treatment for those addicted to other prescription drugs and for pain relief, methadone has come under increased scrutiny with the rise in methadone-associated fatalities over recent years, particularly in certain regions of the country.

SAMHSA Report on NASPER

National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005: A Review of Implementation of Existing State Controlled Substance Monitoring Programs

SAMHSA, October 24, 2007 **PLEASE NOTE: This Report is highly controversial because of questions regarding some of the information contained in the Report.**

www.dpt.samhsa.gov/doc/NASPER%2009142007.doc

Methadone Diversion, Abuse, and Misuse: Deaths Increasing at Alarming Rate

National Drug Intelligence Center, November 11, 2007

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs25/25930/index.htm>

This assessment analyzes the increase in methadone-related deaths since the late 1990s, the increase in legitimately prescribed and disbursed methadone, and the thefts and increased availability of diverted methadone.

National Progress Report on E-Prescribing

SureScripts, December 4, 2007

<http://www.surescripts.com/report/>

5. Congressional Update

The House passed the FY2008 Omnibus spending bill, which combines all appropriations bills except for the Defense spending bill. The omnibus includes \$7.05 million for the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring program. Earlier this year, the House put \$7.5 million in their version of the Commerce-Justice-Science bill for the program, while the Senate set the level at \$5 million. No funding was provided for the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting

(NASPER) Act within the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education spending bill. The omnibus is being sent to the President and he is expected to sign the legislation.

On December 4, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing entitled, "Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances: Addressing Health Care and Law Enforcement Priorities". Witnesses on the first panel included Joseph Rannazzisi, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of Diversion Control and Tony Trenkle, the Director of the Office of E-Health Standards and Services at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The second panel of the hearing included several industry representatives including a representative from SureScripts, which issued the National Progress Report on E-Prescribing (link below under reports section). They state that the report is an "at-a-glance summary" of key statistics detailing the status of e-prescribing adoption and utilization in the U.S. All of the testimony from the hearing is available on the Senate Judiciary Committee website at <http://judiciary.senate.gov/hearing.cfm?id=3042>.

On October 24, the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled, "NASPER: Why Has the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act Not Been Implemented?". The subcommittee received testimony from three witnesses including Dr. H. Westley Clark, the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration and Dr. Len Paulozzi, a Medical Epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Subcommittee Chairman Bart Stupak (D-MI), Ranking Member Ed Whitfield (R-KY) and other members of the subcommittee expressed frustration that NASPER has not been funded despite being signed into law by President Bush in 2005. An archived webcast of the hearing and the witness testimony is available at http://energycommerce.house.gov/cmte_mtgs/110-oi-hrg.102407.NASPER.shtml in the

6. In the News

This section includes summaries and links to recent news items about PMPs, prescription drug diversion, and related issues.

KY Officials Sue Makers of OxyContin

MSNBC.com, October 4, 2007

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21136782/>

Kentucky officials on Thursday sued the manufacturer of OxyContin, the prescription painkiller dubbed "hillbilly heroin," because of widespread abuse in Appalachia. A lawsuit filed by Kentucky Attorney General Greg Stumbo and Pike County officials demands millions in compensation from drug maker Purdue Pharma.

SAMHSA Uses New Technology to Provide Abuse Prevention Information to Consumers of Certain Highly Abused Prescription Drugs

SAMHSA, October 23, 2007

<http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/0710230319.aspx>

Practical Advice Given on Properly Storing Medication and Disposing Unused Drugs

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is announcing the launch of a first-of-its-kind pilot program for providing point-of-sale substance abuse prevention information sheets to the consumers of highly abused prescription drugs. These sheets highlight the

need for preventing the abuse of these medications and provide practical advice on how to properly store medication and dispose of unused amounts. This effort aims to combat the growing abuse of prescription drugs -- particularly among teens and young adults.

Teen prescription drug abuse on the rise

Wausau Daily Herald, November 18, 2007

<http://www.wausaudailyherald.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071118/WDH0101/711180629>

Pill abuse is on the rise among central Wisconsin's young people, with more students caught with drugs in school, more teenagers seeking treatment for addiction and more risking death to get high.

Battling the Prescription Drug Epidemic

CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, November 26, 2007

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/26/eveningnews/main3541082.shtml>

In the war on drugs, according to most national surveys, teenage smoking, alcohol and marijuana use is down. The bad news is that abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is going up. CBS News anchor Katie Couric begins our four-part series called "Generation Rx." Meet Erin. She's your average, ambitious college coed. "It's just this instant happy. And it's not a false happy. It feels so genuine," she said. "I mean, I stay up all night, I'm literally up every hour every day"

Adderall abuse on the rise

Associated Press, December 6, 2007

<http://media.www.usishield.com/media/storage/paper605/news/2007/12/06/AssociatedPress/Adderall.Abuse.On.The.Rise-3134861.shtml>

Josh had one night to write his paper. Coffee usually keeps him awake, but he decided to try something different this time. Among some caffeine pills he had taken that night, the 19-year-old Oklahoma State University sophomore popped half an Adderall and washed it down with four cups of coffee. He finished his paper and said he was happy when he later received a B. Partial credit for his grade goes to the Adderall, he said.

Report flags rise in deaths by methadone ODs

USA Today, December 6, 2007

http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-12-05-methadone_N.htm

Record numbers of people are dying from methadone overdoses as doctors dispense more of the powerful painkiller, according to a report released Wednesday by the National Drug Intelligence Center. The Justice Department's NDIC said it produced the first comprehensive federal analysis in response to "the alarming trend in the number of methadone-related deaths."

Making noise about a silent epidemic

The Boston Globe, December 9, 2007

http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/12/09/making_noise_about_a_silent_epidemic/

Steve Tolman admits he is passionate about the issue. The Brighton state senator says he has seen too many families ravaged by drugs and knows of too many overdoses from which a young person never woke up to be complacent about the problem.

Doctor, assistants indicted on drug charges

Deseret Morning News, December 13, 2007

<http://deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,695235630,00.html>

A federal grand jury on Wednesday morning returned an 18-count indictment against a former Murray doctor and two of his office assistants, accusing the group of running a prescription drug outlet that saw as many as 80 patients a day. During a press conference held Wednesday, federal, state and local law enforcement officials said this case left a trail of "despair" and "tragedy" in the wake of a rogue doctor who was referred to by some as "The Candy Man."

Teen drug use drops, painkiller abuse rises

MSNBC.com, December 11, 2007

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22202803/>

Illicit drug use by teens continued to gradually decline overall this year, but the use of prescription painkillers remains popular among young people, according to a federally financed study released Tuesday at the White House.

The survey, by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, looked at the behavior of 8th, 10th and 12th graders nationwide. The study, in its 33rd year, found that overall drug use is falling, thanks to a drop in the popularity of marijuana and methamphetamines. But it also found that teen use of other drugs, such as cocaine, is holding steady, and narcotics like OxyContin and Vicodin remain in vogue.

System could monitor Broward drug abuse

Miami Herald, December 16, 2007

http://www.miamiherald.com/top_stories/story/346567.html

Broward County, scene of the most famous prescription-drug overdose this year, might become the testing ground for a new database aimed at curbing doctor-shopping.

Florida legislators are proposing a pilot program that would create a computerized system to track the prescriptions that are requested, written and filled in Broward for some of the most addictive medicines.

Prescription drug abuse a growing problem in S. Florida

South Florida Sun Sentinel, December 17, 2007

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/southflorida/sfl-flbdrugtrade1217sbdec17,0,7118453,print.story>

The latest report on drug overdose deaths statewide and recent analysis by authorities signal some changes in Florida's drug trade and drug abuse patterns, particularly in South Florida. Among the growing trends authorities say they have noticed in recent years: Drug dealers who sell powder cocaine and crack cocaine increasingly also peddle more-profitable prescription pain killers, such as oxycodone.