



National Association of State
Controlled Substances Authorities

NASCSA NEWS DIGEST

October 16, 2012

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JAMA Article Focuses on Pseudoephedrine Sales and Clandestine Lab Seizures

An article released in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) today focuses on Kentucky's law that limits pseudoephedrine sales in all counties to 7.2 g/person/month (as of July 2012, formerly 9 g/person/month), sufficient to allow a patient to take the maximum daily dose (240 mg/d) each day and requires electronic tracking of sales,

FDA to Hold Meeting to Reclassify Hydrocodone Products

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA's) Drug Safety and Risk Management (DsaRM) Advisory Committee will meet on October 29-30, 2012 will discuss the reclassification from schedule 3 to 2, of combination hydrocodone products. The Committee will discuss the potential for abuse of drugs containing hydrocodone either combined with other analgesics or as an antitussive. FDA opened docket number FDA-2012-N-0548. Submit comments by November 6, 2012. The notice is found [here](#).

SAMHSA Announces PDMP Enhancement Grants

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) last week announced that nine states received funding to support their Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs). The grants will be used by States to modify their PDMPs so that they can link electronically to electronic health records in prescriber, dispenser, and Emergency Department settings. In addition, States must also use the funds to expand interoperability between States. Funded under the Affordable Care Act Prevention Funds, the program will also include an evaluation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The nine States receiving awards are: Indiana, Florida, Maine, Illinois, Washington, Kansas, Texas, West Virginia, and Ohio. The States will receive up to \$450,000 over two years.

NIDA Launches Online Substance Abuse Prevention Resource for Parents

however notes that despite these restrictions, increases in the number of reported methamphetamine laboratory seizures continue. The article is found [here](#).

Cathy Gallagher to Head Liaison and Policy Section at DEA

Cathy Gallagher has been named as the new Section Chief at DEA's Liaison and Policy Section.

"Pharmacists Under Siege" Webinar offered on Dec. 6

An hour-long webinar is being offered on December 6th on pharmacy robberies. The program "Pharmacies Under Siege" will discuss the issue, preventive measures the pharmaceutical industry should take and potential legislative action that could lead to tougher laws against people who steal medication. For more information click here.

As part of National Substance Abuse Prevention Month, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) this week launched [Family Checkup](#), an online resource that equips parents with research-based skills to help keep their children drug-free. NIDA-funded research has shown the critical role parents play in preventing their children from using drugs. Family Checkup poses questions for parents to consider as they interact with their children, highlighting parenting skills that are important in preventing the initiation or progression of drug use among youth. The resource incorporates videos and other information demonstrating positive and negative examples of parenting techniques. The tools were developed by the Child and Family Center at the University of Oregon.

Congress Passes Safe Doses Act

On September 25, Congress passed the and sent it to the president for his signature. President Obama has until January 20, 2013 to sign the legislation. It is expected the President will sign the bill into law. Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) sponsored the bill which seeks to fight medical theft and protect patients from getting stolen and mishandled medical products that have been resold into the marketplace. [Safe Doses Act \(H.R. 4223\)](#)

Current federal law does not distinguish the theft of a truck load of medication from the theft of any other products. The legislation seeks to address this by:

- Increasing possible sentences for robbing pharmacies of controlled substances.
- Increasing sentences for those who steal medical products.
- Enhancing penalties for the "fences" who knowingly obtain stolen medical products for resale into the supply chain.
- Increasing sentences when harm occurs-where injury or death results from using a stolen substance or where the defendant is employed by an organization in the supply chain.
- Making theft of medical products a predicate for the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) law, to equip law enforcement with needed tools.
- Providing restitution to victims injured by stolen medical products.

Report Offers Strategies For Improving Rx Drug Monitoring

According to a recent report funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts states can improve their Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMP's) by better collecting, analyzing and sharing data. Prescription drug monitoring programs, or PDMPs, collect data electronically on controlled substances dispensed by pharmacies. The report concluded that PDMP's represent a substantially underutilized resource in efforts to improve public health outcomes and address prescription drug abuse due to a variety of reasons including underutilization, differences in the data PDMPs collect, whether and how they ensure data quality, the kinds of data analyses and reports they produce, to which users and under what conditions they make data available, and differences in an array of other procedures and practices. A copy of the report is found [here](#).

Prescription Drug Abuse Rates Fell in 2011, Still Second Only to Marijuana Use

According to a report released late last month the number of people abusing prescription medications fell by 13% from 7 million in 2010 to 6.1 million in 2011, as indicated in the latest [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) (NSDUH). This annual report, provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, also indicates, however, that rates of prescription drug abuse are still second only to rates of marijuana use. As part of the overall decrease in rates of prescription drug abuse, the number of people abusing prescription pain relievers fell by almost 12% from 5.1 million in 2010 to 4.5 million in 2011. The number of people abusing prescription stimulants remained similar, with 1.1 million using stimulants non-medically in 2010 and 970,000 people using stimulants non-medically in 2011. A decrease in abuse of prescription drugs was also seen among youth ages 12 to 17 years old. Abuse of prescription drugs fell from 4% of 12 to 17-year-olds in 2002 to 2.8% in 2011, and this includes a decrease in abuse of pain relievers among this age group. As in 2010, over 50% of people who abused prescription drugs in 2011 obtained them from friends or family for free, according to the NSDUH. Additional information on the survey results is available in a SAMHSA

[press release.](#)

DEA Prohibits Pharmacies From Sending Pre-Populated Prescriptions

The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) recently interpreted the legality of pharmacies that serve nursing homes sending letters to physicians reminding them that a controlled substance prescription for a patient had run out or no longer had refills. DEA confirmed that reminder letters are permissible and can provide the prescriber with the patient's name, the drug name and other relevant prescribing information. However, the letter cannot prepopulate any of the fields in the actual prescription to be transmitted to the pharmacy. DEA stated that "...a pharmacy may not initiate a reminder letter to a prescribing practitioner that provides a partially or fully prepopulated form for the prescribing practitioner because the practitioner has not yet made the determination, in the usual course of professional practice, that there is a legitimate medical purpose for the prescription." Pharmacists should be aware of DEA [guidance](#) on this issue and ensure appropriate compliance with DEA's regulations on prescriptions and related regulations and laws.

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