

SJR 20: Prescription Drug Abuse

Summary of Suggestions

Prepared for the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee
March 13, 2014

Background

During the Senate Joint Resolution 20 study, the committee has received briefing papers summarizing recommended best practices for prescription drug monitoring programs and outlining efforts in other states to reduce the abuse, misuse, and diversion of prescription painkillers. Members also have heard presentations from many stakeholders.

This briefing paper summarizes some of the information and suggestions the committee has received to date.

Prescription Drug Program Best Practices

The laws and administrative rules for the Montana Prescription Drug Registry meet most of the best practices recommended for prescription drug monitoring programs by the PDMP Center of Excellence at Brandeis University.

However, the registry is not yet programmed for some of the practices, such as allowing for interstate data sharing and generating unsolicited reports that would notify prescribers about patients who are obtaining the same drug from multiple providers during a specified period of time. The Board of Pharmacy is working with the registry vendor to make those enhancements to the registry.

Efforts in Other States

The table below summarizes legislative and regulatory efforts undertaken in other states recently, in four areas.

| Category | Activities |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Public Awareness and Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create public awareness campaigns for general or targeted audiences• Provide education for health care providers and law enforcement |
| Prescriber Education and Regulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish limits on prescribing practices• Establish standards of care for treatment of pain patients• Require use of prescription drug registry• Require use of tamper-proof prescription pads• Require continuing education related to opioids• Require licensing boards to establish standards of practice or continuing education requirements |
| Safe Storage and Disposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase drug "take back" opportunities• Increase number of drug drop boxes• Educate patients about safe storage/disposal |
| Overdose Prevention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow EMTs and others to administer drugs to counter opioid overdoses• Provide immunity to people seeking help for a person experiencing an overdose |

Suggestions from Stakeholders

The committee has heard from physicians, pharmacists, law enforcement, state agencies, researchers, the Montana Pain Initiative, and the public as part of the study. The table below groups suggestions from these stakeholders into general topic areas.

| Category | Activities |
|----------------------------|---|
| Prescription Drug Registry | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the registry by allowing office personnel to access it, providing real time data, and allowing interstate data sharing• Require prescribers to use the registry or provide incentives to encourage use of the registry• Provide a stable funding source |
| Dispensing/Use Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Require photo identification to pick up a prescription• Consider use of a "closed" formulary that requires preauthorization for dispensing of certain drugs• Educate patients and family members about the risks of opioid use, misuse, and abuse• Create more drug "take back" days |
| Prescribing Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Require referral to a pain specialist for a patient who is using opioids for longer than a specified amount of time• Strengthen or clarify the law on doctor shopping so prescribers know what information they're expected and/or allowed to report to law enforcement• Provide incentives for training on safe prescribing practices• Screen for substance abuse risk before prescribing opioids• Enter into a chronic pain agreement with patients using long-term opioids• Conduct random drug tests |
| Addiction Treatment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support/increase substance abuse treatment programs• Provide drug education in school setting |

Some speakers also noted that establishing strict limits on the prescribing or dispensing of prescription painkillers could adversely affect chronic pain patients. They cautioned the committee to consider the potential unintended consequences of instituting strict limitations.