



August 5, 2016

MICHAEL BISHOP
7709 LAKE TAHOE AVE
SAN DIEGO CA 92119-2529

Dear Michael Bishop:

As you may know, Pennsylvania (PA) is in the midst of a public health epidemic. Nearly 3,400 Pennsylvanians died from drug overdose last year alone. That's approximately nine Pennsylvanians killed per day from drug overdose. It is time we work together to reverse the rising trend of overdose deaths.

We'd like to introduce you to a new powerful tool to help combat the opioid epidemic — the Pennsylvania Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PA PDMP). With the PA PDMP system, you will be able to easily look up your patients' controlled substance(s) prescription history before prescribing or dispensing. That means no more guesswork — you'll have the information you need to better identify patients struggling with substance use disorder, so that you can help them get the treatment they need.

Eighty percent of heroin users began their battle with drug use by abusing prescription medication. By using the PA PDMP system, you will play a key role in reducing opioid abuse and overdoses. **Starting Aug. 8, 2016, you can register for the PA PDMP** by going to www.doh.pa.gov/PDMP. There you will find a link for registration, as well as tutorials on how to register. Registration is quick and easy — it only takes five minutes.

Prescribers are **required by law** to search the PDMP for each patient when the patient is prescribed a controlled substance for the first time and/or when there is clinical concern the patient may be suffering from the disease of addiction or diverting a controlled substance(s). However, the Department of Health recommends you search the PDMP **every time** you prescribe or dispense a controlled substance. The database contains all schedule II – V prescriptions dispensed to outpatients, which are collected by the PA PDMP within 72 hours of having been dispensed to the patients. The PA PDMP will be available for query starting on **Aug. 25, 2016**, so we ask that you begin using the system at that time.

We understand that you have time constraints. To make consistent use of the PA PDMP more practicable, **prescribers and pharmacists may grant access to any delegates under their employment or supervision** to query the system on their behalf. Delegates register for their own accounts and enter your email address to request access to the database. For information on who can be a delegate and how they can register, please visit the PA PDMP website at www.doh.pa.gov/PDMP.

Together, we can save thousands of Pennsylvanians from opioid abuse, heroin use and overdose death.

Sincerely,

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Staff

This bill would specify that the requirement to consult the CURES database does not apply to a health care practitioner in any of the following circumstances:

- If a health care practitioner prescribes, orders, or furnishes a controlled substance to be administered or dispensed to a patient while the patient is admitted to any of the following facilities or during an emergency transfer between any of the following facilities:
 - A licensed clinic
 - An outpatient setting
 - A health facility
 - A county medical facility

- When a health care practitioner prescribes, orders, administers, furnishes, or dispenses a controlled substance in the emergency department of a general acute care hospital if the quantity of the controlled substance does not exceed a seven- day supply .

- If a health care practitioner prescribes, orders, administers, furnishes, or dispenses a controlled substance to a patient as part of the patient’s treatment for a surgical procedure, if the quantity of the controlled substance does not exceed a non-refillable five-day supply and is in a licensed clinic, an outpatient setting, a health facility, a county medical facility or a place of practice.

- If a health care practitioner prescribes, orders, administers, furnishes or dispenses a controlled substance to a patient currently receiving hospice care.

- If all of the following circumstances are satisfied: 2

- It is not reasonably possible for a health care practitioner to access the information in the CURES database in a timely manner.

- Another health care practitioner or designee authorized to

access CURES is not reasonably available.

○ The quantity of controlled substance does not exceed a non-refillable five-day supply.

□ If the CURES database is not operational, as determined by DOJ, or when it cannot be accessed by a health care practitioner because of a temporary technological or electrical failure. A health care practitioner shall, without undue delay, seek to correct any cause of the failure that is reasonably within his or her control.

□ If the CURES database cannot be accessed because of technological limitations that are not reasonably within the control of the health care practitioner.

□ If the CURES database cannot be accessed because of exceptional circumstances, as demonstrated by a health care practitioner. □ This bill would specify if CURES is not consulted by the health care practitioner because one of the above exemptions applies, the practitioner shall document the reason he or she did not consult CURES in the patient's medical record.