

# Thinking of prescribing an opioid? Did you check your state prescription drug monitoring program?

More than 16,000 Americans died in 2013 from an opioid-related overdose. More than 8,000 died from a heroin-related overdose.

***Registering with and checking your state prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) can be important steps to help you make more informed prescribing decisions.***

The American Medical Association Task Force to Reduce Opioid Abuse urges you to register with and check your state PDMP as one of the key screening tools to help determine whether to prescribe an opioid – and if so, how to prescribe appropriately. The PDMP can help ensure you are making fully informed prescribing decisions.

All PDMPs are not created equal, but **an effective PDMP can help you and your practice do the following:**

- **Quickly, simply and accurately** assess your patient's prescription history while the patient is in the exam room – or prior to the visit
- **Immediately determine** whether your patients have received prescriptions from **other prescribers** and dispensers, including from other states
- **Easily register** to use a PDMP as part of your license renewal process
- **Identify other prescribers** so that you can help coordinate care and determine appropriate follow-up activities and structure of care
- **Help you identify** when you may need to counsel and refer the patient for **additional treatment** for persistent pain or a substance use disorder
- Allows you to **review your own prescribing history**
- Enable **nurses, physician assistants and other trained delegates** in your office to check the PDMP as part of the patient's pre-visit planning
- Allows you to create **alerts** so you will know when a patient receives a prescription for opioids from other prescribers
- Provide and encourage **best practices** – as determined by physicians in the same or similar practice – when making prescribing decisions



**Physicians need to be sure that they are prescribing appropriately and taking necessary precautions, including consulting PDMPs when clinically indicated.”**

Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA, Chair, AMA Task Force to Reduce Opioid Abuse, Committee on Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, United States House of Representatives, April 23, 2015

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- Guidelines for checking the PDMP should include common-sense exemptions for certain, vulnerable patient populations (e.g. cancer, home-bound hospice or palliative care patients)
- Allows **prompts** for co-prescribing naloxone when clinically indicated

The task force encourages physicians to work with their state medical society to ensure that their state PDMP contains these key elements to help reduce prescription drug misuse, overdose and death – and enhance overdose prevention and treatment. Take the first step. Contact your state medical society today.

## ABOUT THE AMA TASK FORCE TO REDUCE OPIOID ABUSE

More than 25 state, specialty and other national health care associations joined the AMA in late 2014 to participate in a collaborative effort to meaningfully address the nation’s prescription opioid misuse, diversion, overdose and death epidemic. The specific goals of the task force:

- Increase physicians’ registration and use of effective PDMPs
- Enhance physicians’ education on safe, effective and evidence-based prescribing of opioids
- Reduce the stigma of pain and promote comprehensive assessment and treatment
- Reduce the stigma of substance use disorder and enhance access to treatment
- Support overdose prevention efforts by expanding access to naloxone and providing Good Samaritan protections

## MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE:

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
 American Academy of Family Physicians  
 American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
 American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
 American Academy of Pain Medicine  
 American Academy of Pediatrics  
 American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
 American Association of Neurological Surgeons and Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
 American College of Emergency Physicians  
 American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
 American College of Physicians

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
 American Dental Association  
 American Medical Association  
 American Osteopathic Association  
 American Psychiatric Association  
 American Society of Addiction Medicine  
 American Society of Anesthesiologists  
 Arkansas Medical Society  
 Massachusetts Medical Society  
 Medical Society of the State of New York  
 New Mexico Medical Society  
 Ohio State Medical Association  
 Oregon Medical Association  
 Utah Medical Association