

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. State Updates**

- Congratulations to Peter Holman for becoming Vermont's official Program Director of the Vermont Prescription Monitoring System.
- Congratulations to Illinois for passage by the state General Assembly of the expansion of the prescription monitoring program to cover all controlled substances.
- Congratulations to Tennessee for recent passage of its bill to expand access to PMP data to licensed practitioners.
- A PMP bill status update will be distributed during the last of July 2007 to capture state legislative activity for the first half of 2007.

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**2. 2007 National Prescription Monitoring Conference**

At BJA's request, NAMSDL will hold the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Prescription Monitoring Programs: Developing Strategies to Ensure Health and Safety on **December 6-7, 2007** in Washington, D.C. The Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Capitol located at 550 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 2004, 202-479-4000, FAX 202-488-4627.

A draft agenda will be forthcoming in the next month.

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**3. Linkage between PMPs and Electronic Tracking of Pseudoephedrine Products**

States have begun developing electronic tracking systems to monitor compliance with their sales and purchase restrictions on pseudoephedrine products. To help coordinate the state efforts and ensure the systems are interoperable with other tracking systems, NAMSDL, in consultation with BJA and ONDCP, has formed a Meth Precursor Tracking Advisory Committee (Committee). The first meeting of the Committee was in March 2007 at which members drafted initial recommendations for states establishing federally funded pseudoephedrine tracking systems (see attached recommendations.)

To help incorporate "lessons learned" from the development of PMPs into the Committee's work, Bill Lockwood of ASAP and Scott Serich of IJIS have agreed to serve as members. Subsequent to the March meeting, ASAP formed a committee, chaired by Bill and Scott, to work with state officials on establishing technical standards for the pseudoephedrine tracking systems.

Additional work of the Committee will be presented in future updates.

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#### 4. NAMSDL Staff Update

As you know, NAMSDL's State and Federal Liaison, Rebecca Rose, joined BJA as a Policy Advisor in May 2007. We're pleased that in her new role Rebecca will continue to work on prescription monitoring issues and other topics covered by NAMSDL activities. Rebecca can be reached at her new e-mail address of [RebeccaRose@usdoj.gov](mailto:RebeccaRose@usdoj.gov)

The Fall of 2007 is the target period for bringing someone on board to work exclusively on NAMSDL's National HRPDMP Technical Assistance Project. If you need assistance with legislative and policy issues regarding PMPs over the next few months, feel free to contact me at [sherrygreen@natlalliance.org](mailto:sherrygreen@natlalliance.org), 703-836-6100, ext. 16 or Sarah Kelsey, our new Legislative Attorney, [sarahkelsey@natlalliance.org](mailto:sarahkelsey@natlalliance.org), 434-973-7800.

Other additions to the NAMSDL Team in 2007 include: Joe Dunn, Deputy Director; Dave Russell, Operations Manager; and Ashley Russell, Executive Assistant.

Our entire Team looks forward to helping you plan, develop, implement and enhance your PMPs.

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#### 5. Congressional Update

On May 16, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing entitled, "Rogue Online Pharmacies: The Growing Problem of Internet Drug Trafficking". Witnesses included Joseph Califano, Chairman and President of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University and Joseph Rannazzisi, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of Diversion Control. In his testimony, Califano announced CASA's latest report on Internet pharmacies called, "You've Got Drugs IV" (see link below).

On June 11, the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee passed the FY08 spending bill. Included in the bill is \$7.5 million for the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. The timing for full committee consideration is unclear due to an agreement to add earmarks into the legislation before it reaches the House floor. The Senate Appropriations committee considered the companion Senate bill on June 28. Included in the bill is \$5 million for the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.

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#### 6. In the News

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

**Number of U.S. Emergency Department Visits Involving Nonmedical Use of Pharmaceuticals Increases from 2004 to 2005, Center for Substance Abuse Research, University of Maryland, April 9, 2007**

<http://www.cesar.umd.edu/cesar/cesarfax/vol16/16-14.pdf>

An estimated 598,542 U.S. emergency department (ED) visits in 2005 involved the nonmedical use of prescription or over-the-counter pharmaceuticals or dietary supplements, an increase of 21% more than 2004 estimates. According to recently released data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN),

the greatest increase occurred for visits involving stimulant drugs (33% increase), followed by respiratory agents such as antihistamines and decongestants (31% increase), and opioids (24% increase). The only other pharmaceutical drugs that showed statistically significant increases in ED-involved visits between 2004 and 2005 were antipsychotics and benzodiazepines. The report notes that "it is not possible to know, based on the documentation available in ED medical records, the extent to which the source of these drugs is a legitimate prescription, as opposed to other sources"

**Prescription Drug Addiction Is Under Investigation, Science Daily, April 19, 2007**

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/04/070418163701.htm>

University of California is launching a new study to evaluate treatments for addiction to prescription painkillers and has openings for patients to enroll. This is the first large-scale study to assess whether addiction to opioid painkillers, such as Vicodin and OxyContin, can effectively be treated with drug treatments currently used for heroin addiction.

**Michigan Ranks Among Top States In Nation In Teen Abuse Of Prescription Drugs, Medical News Today, April 28, 2007**

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=69087>

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and local Detroit experts urged parents today to take action against the alarmingly high rate of teen prescription drug abuse in Michigan. The latest research shows that Michigan has one of the highest rates of teen prescription drug abuse in the country, as teens turn away from street drugs and use prescription drugs to get high.

**OxyContin Makers Admit Deception, Washington Post, Washington, DC May 11, 2007**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/10/AR2007051000892.html>

The manufacturer of the potent painkiller [OxyContin](#) and three current and former executives at the company yesterday pleaded guilty to falsely marketing the drug in a way that played down its addictive properties and led to scores of people becoming addicted, prosecutors said.

**"You've Got Drugs!" IV, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, May, 16, 2007**

<http://www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/380-YGD4%20Report.pdf>

For three years straight the number of rogue Web sites selling controlled prescription drugs like OxyContin, Vicodin, Valium, and Ritalin has increased, according to a new White Paper released by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University.

**Drug sweep brings arrests in cold medication probe 10 charged as part of methamphetamine fight, Press & Sun-Bulletin , Binghamton, NY, Friday, June 1, 2007**

<http://www.pressconnects.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070601/NEWS01/706010343/1001>

Following what law enforcement officials called a "ground-breaking" investigation, 10 Southern Tier and northern Pennsylvania residents face charges for allegedly buying illegal amounts of over-the-counter cold medications that can be used to manufacture methamphetamine. Law enforcement officials arrested the 10 people at various locations Thursday morning following a four-month investigation, said Lt. Patrick Garey, with the New York State Police Community Narcotics Enforcement Team-Southern Tier.

**Doctor charged in prescription drug ring, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY, June 8, 2007**  
<http://www.syracuse.com/articles/news/index.ssf?/base/news-10/1181293462287060.xml&coll=1>

A family doctor who had been censured for illegally prescribing narcotics was charged Thursday with writing prescriptions for thousands of pills to patients, who would then give him some of the drugs, federal prosecutors said.

**Prescription drug abuse gaining among teenagers, Lexington Herald-Leader, Lexington, KY, June 14, 2007**  
<http://www.kentucky.com/news/state/story/97294.html>

Kentucky adults lead the nation in the abuse of prescription medications, but new studies show that Kentucky teens, and teens everywhere, are turning to medicine cabinets rather than street corners to get high.

**When Is a Pain Doctor a Drug Pusher?, New York Times Magazine, New York, NY, June 17, 2007**  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/17/magazine/17pain-t.html?ex=1183089600&en=10ef25fd20b00486&ei=5070>

Ronald McIver is a prisoner in a medium-security federal compound in Butner, N.C. He is 63 years old, of medium height and overweight, with a white Santa Claus beard, white hair and a calm, direct and intelligent manner. He is serving 30 years for drug trafficking, and so will likely live there the rest of his life. McIver (pronounced mi-KEE-ver) has not been convicted of drug trafficking in the classic sense. He is a doctor who for years treated patients suffering from chronic pain. At the Pain Therapy Center, his small storefront office not far from Main Street in Greenwood, S.C., he cracked backs, gave trigger-point injections and put patients through physical therapy. He administered ultrasound and gravity-inversion therapy and devised exercise regimens. And he wrote prescriptions for high doses of opioid drugs like OxyContin.

**Surveys find spike in teen use of prescription drugs, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, St. Louis, MO, June 26, 2007**  
<http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/news/stories.nsf/stlouiscitycounty/story/D27D55FC4CFAF1AF8625730600139D62?OpenDocument>

A combination of easy access and mistaken notions is hooking a mounting number of teenagers on prescription drugs. The statistics are alarming, according to federal officials. There has been a 300 percent increase in the number of teenagers going into treatment for addiction to prescription pain relievers over the past decade. Painkillers such as Vicodin and OxyContin, antidepressants, anti-psychotics and anti-anxiety medications such as Xanax have become drugs of choice. Teens say they are using Vicodin more than any other drug except marijuana. And almost half of them say they get them from friends or family for free.

**Doc charged in drug abuse case, The Times-Tribune, Scranton, PA, June 27, 2006**  
[http://www.thetimes-tribune.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=18521978&BRD=2185&PAG=461&dept\\_id=416046&rfi=6](http://www.thetimes-tribune.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=18521978&BRD=2185&PAG=461&dept_id=416046&rfi=6)

A Luzerne County doctor was charged Tuesday with fraudulently obtaining large quantities of high-powered prescription pain medication for personal use, the state attorney general's office said. Dr.

Lawrence Kansky, 50, a podiatrist with offices in Fairview Township and Hazleton, is accused of ordering more than 2,000 tablets of Hydrocodone — the generic form of Vicodin — over six months in 2006.