Georgia Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) begins allowing access to Rx data.

On July 26th, the switch was finally flipped to turn on access to allow practitioners to register and have access to the Georgia Prescription Drug Marketing Program (PDMP). This means that all practitioners licensed by the Georgia Board of Dentistry who have authority to prescribe or order controlled substances can now register for access the GA PDMP.

Georgia practitioners will be able to use the GA PDMP to determine where (which pharmacies) their patients are having their controlled substance prescriptions filled, and if their patients have been obtaining similar controlled substances from other practitioners and where those prescriptions have been filled. Two other PDMP function will allow practitioners to see a listing of how many controlled substance prescriptions have been filled as having been written in the name of that practitioners. A similar function will allow a practitioner to see how many controlled substance prescriptions have been filling using their DEA permit number.

Even though practitioners have just gained access to the PDMP, community pharmacies have been reporting prescription data to the PDMP since mid-May. However, they were required to report their controlled substance prescription data starting with prescriptions filled on September 1, 2012. The numbers have steadily climbed after the bugs were worked out to close to 15 million prescriptions from January 2013 through June. In June alone, 2 million controlled substance prescriptions were reported as being filled.

Because pharmacists were able to register first, we have already had quite a number of them register and begin accessing the PDMP, almost 1,000. One pharmacist checked the database for several of his patients who he thought were only using his pharmacy to get their hydrocodone and alprazolam prescriptions filled. To his surprise, he found that all of the patients he checked had been going to multiple other pharmacies, getting the same type prescriptions filled and going to multiple physicians. He decided to stop filling prescriptions for those customers. Another pharmacist checked the database for patients she suspected were doctor shopping. But to her relief, none of those patients were getting prescriptions filled at any other pharmacy than hers.

As soon as you read this article, please take the time to register for your access to the PDMP, don't wait any longer. Some of you have been waiting for almost 9 years for access to a PDMP, so now's the time. To register, just follow these directions:

Access the GA PDMP website at: www.hidinc.com/gapdmp

On the main PDMP website page, click on the Practitioner/Pharmacist link located on the Left side Menu.

On the next page, click on "Registration Site" and a log-in menu will appear.

On the log-in menu, type "*newacct*" in the User Name field, then type "*welcome*" in the Password field, and click on "OK".

The GA PDMP Account Registration Form page will appear. Complete this form. Make sure you type in your name *exactly* as it appears on the composite board website, otherwise your application will be flagged for further review. When you type in your pharmacist license number, be sure to include the 'DN0' in front of your license number. For those of you with two zeros in front of your license number, include both zeros.

After you finish your registration, you are asked to print out the form for your records.

As soon as your application is approved, you will receive an email with further instructions on completing your registration – and in this email you will be asked to decide on a PDMP User Name and Password. Once you complete your registration, then you can begin accessing the GA PDMP database for information on your controlled substance prescriptions.

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And despite the restrictions the law has placed on the use of PDMP database information, the GA PDMP is an excellent tool for prescribers who will take the time to use it in order to weed out drug abuse, drug misuse and identify patients that are being under treated by not having their prescriptions filled.

If you have any questions, please either contact HID (the database company operating the GA PDMP) using their contact information at www.hidinc.com/gapdmp. Or send your questions to the GA PDMP managers at GAPDMP@gdna.ga.gov.

Thank you and good luck

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