

California's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Physician Survey: Methodology

Licensed physicians in California were surveyed regarding their attitudes and behaviors around prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs). The survey was funded by grants from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and was undertaken by researchers from the University of California Davis and the California Department of Public Health, with cooperation from the Medical Board of California and the Osteopathic Medical Board of California. Our survey sample was all California-licensed allopathic physicians with licenses expiring in November, 2016 and all California-licensed osteopathic physicians with licenses expiring in December 2016. California allopathic physician licenses expire every two years at the end of the physician's birth month, and California osteopathic physicians licenses expire every two years and are renewed in two-month blocks based on the physician's birth month. Thus, our sample comprised a quasi-random sample of roughly 1/24th of California allopathic physicians and 1/12th of all osteopathic physicians.

Initial survey invitations were sent from the respective licensing board in the same envelope as physicians' license renewal notice. Invitations were sent in late August 2016 to allopathic physicians and early October 2016 to osteopathic physicians. Respondents could access this survey by typing in a simple website address, by scanning a QR code, or by going to their licensing board website and clicking on a survey link posted there. Periodic mail and email reminders were sent to respondents who had not yet responded to the survey. The survey closed for allopathic physicians on January 31, 2017, and closed for osteopathic physicians on January 31, 2017.

The survey was an online-only survey administered using the Qualtrics Survey Software. Respondents were required to enter their license number at the start of the survey. This allowed us to exclude physicians outside the sample, to prevent respondents from taking the survey multiple times, and to track responses so that we did not send reminder letters or emails to participants who had already completed the survey.

Items used in the research letter titled, "Obstetricians and Gynecologists Remain Skeptical of Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Effectiveness," are listed below. The complete survey is available by request from one of the co-authors (Stephen Henry, sghenry@ucdavis.edu).

California's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Survey Instrument [Extract]

Physicians who responded to the survey and reported having a DEA license to prescribe controlled substances answered the following questions.

Are you registered for CURES?

- Yes
- No
- Registration in process
- Do not know

Note: Respondents who answered "yes" or "registration in process" were counted as registered for CURES, and were also asked the following series of questions:

How useful to you is CURES for the following:

	Very Useful	Useful	A little useful	Not useful at all
Helping manage patients with pain	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping build trust with patients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informing decisions to prescribe controlled substances.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying patients filling prescriptions from multiple doctors and/or pharmacies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying patients who misuse or abuse controlled prescription drugs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

At the end of the survey; physicians were asked to choose their survey from a dropdown menu with the following choices adapted from the list of specialty board certifications offered by the American Board of Medicine Specialties:

Please choose the specialty that best describes your current practice:

- Allergy and Immunology
- Anesthesiology
- Colon and Rectal Surgery
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine (general)
- Internal Medicine (subspecialty)
- Medical Genetics
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
- Nuclear Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Otolaryngology
- Pathology
- Pain Medicine
- Pediatrics (general)
- Pediatrics (subspecialty)
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Plastic Surgery
- Preventive Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Radiology
- Surgery (general)
- Surgery (subspecialty)
- Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery
- Urology