

# Technical Assistance Guide No. 03-14

## Promoting Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs



**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice

Brandeis University The Heller School  
For Social Policy and Management

*This project was supported by Grant No. 2011-PM-BX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*

## INTRODUCTION

A primary purpose of Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) is making data available to authorized users to assist them in reducing and preventing the misuse, abuse and diversion of prescription controlled substances. State laws and regulations dictate to whom PDMPs can provide reports and under what conditions. While PDMPs are generally experiencing an increase in the number of authorized users requesting reports, the numbers are still relatively small, especially among those programs that do not mandate enrollment or usage.

Health care practitioners (e.g., physicians, osteopaths, dentists, podiatrists, veterinarians, pharmacists) are the major users of PDMP data today. PDMP information is a resource for practitioners and may help avoid duplicative therapy, identify negative drug interactions, and assist in preventing and treating substance abuse. Practitioners who routinely query their PDMP have reported that the PDMP reports have become an invaluable tool in their practices.<sup>1</sup> Still, many PDMPs struggle to increase the number of prescribers and dispensers requesting and utilizing the program and assimilating PDMP reports into their practices. The same is true for law enforcement and regulatory boards. Even though boards and law enforcement have recently begun to request more of these reports, the numbers are even less than those of prescribers and dispensers.

## PURPOSE

Increasing awareness, access, and use of PDMPs continues to be a major focus of the PDMP Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC). In 2011, TTAC hosted a national meeting on “Practitioner Education on the Utilization of PDMP Data.” TTAC brought together participants from diverse disciplines and areas of expertise, including experts on drug abuse, practicing physicians and pharmacists, representatives of federal agencies, and state PDMP administrators. The purpose of the meeting was to examine the issue of practitioners’ access to and use of PDMP reports and to develop a curriculum to assist PDMP Administrators in their efforts to train and educate practitioners about PDMPs.

As a result, TTAC developed “A Guide for PDMP Administrators on Practitioner Education” and several MS PowerPoint slide-sets for use by PDMPs in their efforts to make the health care community aware of PDMPs. These are available on the [TTAC website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs, “An Assessment of State Prescription Monitoring Program Effectiveness and Results” Version 1, 11.30.07, [http://pdmpexcellence.org/pdfs/alliance\\_pmp\\_rpt2\\_1107.pdf](http://pdmpexcellence.org/pdfs/alliance_pmp_rpt2_1107.pdf)

In our continuing effort to provide assistance to encourage access and use of PDMPs, TTAC developed this Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) to assist PDMP administrators in promoting their programs. This TAG examines several approaches to promoting a PDMP that a PDMP administrator may wish to consider. Some of the methods or suggestions included in the TAG are practices that have been implemented by some PDMPs. A successful promotional campaign will result in increased use of the PDMP, making it a more visible and effective public health tool. When more stakeholders utilize the PDMP, patient care and safety is enhanced, prevention and treatment of the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs is identified and treated earlier, and the diversion of these drugs to the streets is curtailed.

## **KNOW YOUR STAKEHOLDERS**

A first step in successfully promoting a PDMP involves identifying and understanding the needs of each authorized user. For example, depending on a physician's specialty (e.g., pediatric, oncology, psychiatry), the frequency and use of the PDMP may vary. Some specialties will query the PDMP daily, while others may only need to access the PDMP occasionally or on a patient-by-patient basis and some may never issue a controlled substance prescription. Pharmacists access and use PDMP reports in a different context than that of a prescriber, while law enforcement use differs somewhat from that of a regulatory board. It is, therefore, essential for administrators to acquaint themselves with each end user in order to better communicate the merits of the PDMP and better serve each of their particular needs. Below are a few avenues an administrator can explore to better acquaint themselves with end users:

- Many PDMPs have advisory groups that provide the PDMP program with feedback and input on particular issues. These advisory groups usually consist of individuals representing various stakeholders, including authorized end users. It is important for PDMP staff to engage members of the advisory group in examining ways to promote their programs and to become knowledgeable of the needs of a particular end user.
- If a PDMP does not have an advisory group, you may obtain information by directly communicating with the prescriber and dispenser communities to ascertain their needs and their expectations of the PDMP.

- Presenting at health care professional conferences is an effective way to get to know stakeholders and engage in discussions about their profession and the PDMP. Many administrators make themselves available to present at these conferences and respond to questions afterwards.
- PDMPs sometimes conduct surveys to gauge end users' needs and satisfaction, which provides valuable feedback about the PDMP.<sup>23</sup> Surveys should be designed to encourage comments for each question asked; an open-ended comment section is an effective way to obtain information on the end users' perspective of the PDMP and how they use it.

## DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

As with any new initiative, PDMP administrators should consider establishing a plan to promote the program. The plan should outline specific steps which will lead to achieving the goals and objectives of successfully promote the program. The action plan should:

- Be realistic and take into account current funding, staff allocation, and other resources available to the PDMP.
- Identify specific and measurable goals. For example, a goal may be to increase the number of prescribers and dispensers who use the program by 10% within the next 6 months or to conduct a certain number of presentations about the program within a certain period of time.
- Identify which stakeholders to focus (e.g., prescribers, dispensers, law enforcement, regulatory boards) and prioritize the list.
- Detail the tasks to be performed to promote the program with a realistic timeline to complete each task.

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<sup>2</sup> Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, "2010 KASPER Satisfaction Survey", <http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/BDC0DFC9-924B-4F11-A10A-5EB17933FDDB/0/2010KASPERsatisfactionSurveyExecutiveSummary.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Early Assessment of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program: A Survey of Providers, Program Design and Evaluation Services, Multnomah County Health Department and Oregon Health Authority, 2013, [http://www.orpdmp.com/orpdmpfiles/PDF\\_Files/Reports/PDES\\_PDMPeval\\_01.10.13.pdf](http://www.orpdmp.com/orpdmpfiles/PDF_Files/Reports/PDES_PDMPeval_01.10.13.pdf)

## **ALLOCATING FUNDS OR BUDGETING**

Many PDMPs are struggling to simply keep their programs operational; making it difficult to consider using even a small portion of funds for promoting the program. However it is important for PDMP administrators to remember the more PDMPs are used the better the public health and safety issues surrounding prescription drugs are addressed. Below are possible sources for funding a promotional campaign:

- PDMPs that have been awarded a Harold Rogers PDMP (HRPDMP) grant may use some of the funds for promotional initiatives; these should be included in the grant budget. However, HRPDMP grantees should consult with their BJA Program Manager before using grant funds for such purposes.
- A PDMP's parent agency may have funds from another program (e.g., epidemiology, compliance, injury and violence, practitioner education) for promotional campaigns. Alternatively, PDMP information may be included in another program's campaign.
- The parent agency's communications office may also be an excellent source of funding as it is generally responsible to promote the agency's programs.
- A PDMP could partner with other State agencies or stakeholder organizations to host a conference for the healthcare community.

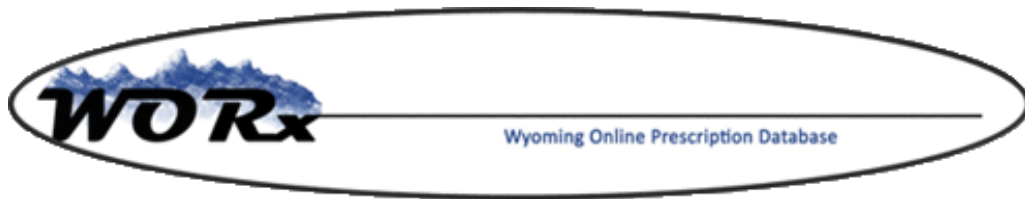
## **DESIGN A LOGO OR CREATE AN ACRONYM**

A simple way to increase a PDMP's visibility and make it readily recognized is to create an acronym and/or logo for the program. This is a marketing tool used by many private companies proven to be successful in identifying and branding a product. The parent agency's communications office will have the relevant expertise and experience, having worked with other programs in your agency. Many PDMPs have created such acronyms and logos and report that it has increased the visibility and recognition of the PDMP.

Acronym examples:

- California – **CURES** (Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System)
- Florida – **E-FORCSE** (Electronic Florida Online Reporting of Controlled Substances Evaluation)
- Illinois – **PIL** (Prescription Information Library)
- Indiana – **INSPECT** (Indiana Scheduled Prescription Electronic Collection and Tracking)
- Kansas – **K-TRACS** (Kansas Tracking and Reporting of Controlled Substances)
- Kentucky – **KASPER** (Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting)
- Michigan – **MAPS** (Michigan Automated Prescription System)
- Nebraska – **NeHII** (Nebraska Health Information Initiative)
- New York – **I-STOP** (Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing)
- Ohio – **OARRS** (Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System)
- South Carolina – **SCRIPTS** (South Carolina Reporting and Identification Prescription Tracking System)
- Wyoming – **WORx** (Wyoming Online Prescription database)

Logo examples:



## **DESCRIBE THE SERVICES AND BENEFITS OF THE PDMP**

In your informational brochures, presentations, packets, or other forms of information, it is vital for stakeholders to understand the workings of a PDMP and, even more importantly, how the program can assist them. Identify individuals or ‘champions’ who have successfully used the PDMP and are willing to provide testimonials about their experiences to their peers. Some PDMPs have invited these champions to present their experiences at seminars or workshops. The TAG on [Practitioner Education](#) is a good source to use when looking for ideas on how to present the PDMP to stakeholders. In promoting PDMPs, an administrator’s message to stakeholders should include the following:

- The PDMP serves as an invaluable tool in carrying out their professional responsibilities.
- Use of PDMP reports assists in curtailing drug abuse, misuse and diversion and, thereby, reduces overdoses and deaths.
- PDMPs continually strive to make accessibility and use of the program easier.

## **EXAMPLE OF PROMOTION METHODS**

Below is a listing of different methods, used by states, to promote PDMP programs and encourage stakeholders to take advantage of the reports available to them.

### ***Common Outreach Methods***

Some of the current and most commonly used methods for outreach to stakeholders include:

- Creating a mailing list for sending information about the PDMPs to encourage registration and use.
- Using Health Professional/Health Care Facility Association or Licensing Board newsletters or mailing lists to send out information about the PDMP.
- Presenting at Health Professional/Facility Association, Hospital, Health Clinic, or Licensing Board meetings and conferences.
- Providing a public website with information on the program’s benefits and how to register for access.
- Writing an article about the PDMP for a health professional organization’s journal or newsletter.



## ***Innovative Approaches to Promoting PDMPs***

The following are some innovative approaches that could be used to enhance your current outreach methods:

- Several states have developed web-based tutorials that walk providers through each step of using the system. This approach allows for busy providers to train themselves at their convenience rather than when the limited PDMP staff is available. Videos can also be created and used by health care organizations to train their staff.
- Develop training that is approved for continuing education credits (CEs). Since providers need CEs to maintain their license, this is an effective channel for getting PDMP information to them. Offering the CE for free can be an extra incentive.
- Use unsolicited reporting (see [PDMP Center of Excellence guidance document](#)) to reach those that are not registered with the PDMP. When you notify providers about a patient who has reached a threshold, you alert them to potential issues with the patient and to the monitoring program as well. Having a chance to see the value of the PDMP data on one of their patients can encourage registration and use.
- Work with local prevention and advocacy groups who are very receptive in working with others including the PDMP to get the word out to the community about the usefulness of the PDMPs.
- Partner with support groups of families who have been impacted by prescription drug abuse to make presentations to health care professionals and others.
- Partner with state and local health departments in your state. By providing them with aggregated PDMP data for their region they, in return, may be able to assist with outreach to the providers in that region.
- Partner with other state agencies who are stakeholders and demonstrate to them the types of reports a PDMP can generate to assist them in their work, including trend analysis and prescribing and dispensing indicators.
- Partner with the health professional licensing boards to see if you can insert an informational brochure or fact sheet about the PDMP into their initial license applications and renewal applications. If these are done online, you could even provide a link to register with the PDMP as they renew their license.
- Create a mobile registration unit consisting of a laptop, wireless internet access, and a printer (if needed for notarized forms). Take the unit to presentations to groups so that providers can register immediately after being educated. The unit could also be used at conferences in the areas provided for vendor exhibits.