



Controlled Substances Board



WISCONSIN | **ePDMP**

Report 27

2023 Quarter 4 and Year-End Summary

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Introduction

This report is being provided pursuant to ss. 961.385 (5) – (6), Wis. Stats., which requires the Controlled Substances Board (CSB) to submit a quarterly report to the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) about the Wisconsin Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (WI PDMP). This report is intended to satisfy that requirement for the fourth quarter of 2023 and will primarily focus on analysis of PDMP data from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, and the preceding 12 months. For annual analysis of the WI PDMP from 2017 through 2022, see the Q4 2022 report found at <https://dps.wi.gov/Pages/BoardsCouncils/CSB/Reports.aspx>.

The WI PDMP was first deployed in June 2013. It is administered by DPS pursuant to the regulations and policies established by the CSB. An enhanced system, the WI ePDMP, was launched in January 2017, allowing the WI PDMP to become a multi-faceted tool in Wisconsin's efforts to address prescription drug abuse, misuse, and diversion through clinical decision support, prescribing practice assessment, communication among disciplines, and public health surveillance. Effective April 1, 2017, prescribers are required to check the WI ePDMP prior to issuing a prescription order for a monitored prescription drug, defined as controlled substances in Schedules II-V or drugs identified by the Board as having a substantial potential for abuse.

The WI ePDMP Public Statistics Dashboard (<https://pdmp.wi.gov/statistics>) provides interactive data visualizations for much of the data contained in this report, including county-level data for many of the charts. The Statistics Dashboard is dynamically updated, and the values of the preceding quarters may be revised after the conclusion of a quarter. The PDMP report is based on the snapshot data at the time when the paper was being produced.

Certain information typically included in the report was not available for this reporting period due to technical issues, including numbers of patients by morphine milligram equivalents (MME) groups, numbers and trends of Data-Driven Alerts by types, and numbers of Law Enforcement Alerts to date by types.

User Satisfaction

DSPS has conducted a survey of WI ePDMP users on a quarterly basis beginning the second quarter of 2021 to measure user satisfaction and inform current and future system enhancements. Across the four surveys in 2023, an average of 85% of survey participants are satisfied with the ePDMP, which is a 7% increase from the overall satisfaction in 2022. The satisfaction rate increases to an average of 87% for respondents who have the option to access the ePDMP via an Electronic Health Record (EHR) interface. Two of the ePDMP functionalities, “Querying Patient History” (80%) and “Account Registration” (75%), received the highest satisfaction rate. Among the features in the patient history report, an average of 91% of respondents acknowledged “Opioid History in the Last 60 Days Indicator” as “Extremely or Very Helpful” in informing their work as healthcare professionals, followed by “Patient History Details” (87%), “Prescriber-Reported Alerts” (82%), and “Law Enforcement-Reported Alerts” (79%).

The Q4 2023 survey was sent to approximately 1,700 randomly selected users out of nearly 35,000 ePDMP users who were identified as “active,” or non-prescribing users who had logged into the ePDMP in the past twelve months and prescribers who had patient queries conducted by themselves or their delegates in the past twelve months. A total of 312 complete responses were collected between January 11 and January 19, 2024. Approximately ninety-three percent of respondents were Healthcare Professionals, including Prescribers (50%), Non-Prescribers (13%), Pharmacists (11%), Dispensing Practitioners (2%) and Delegates (17%). The remaining 7% of respondents were Pharmacies, Submitters, Medical Coordinators, and Law Enforcement.

The survey indicates that most users are satisfied with the WI ePDMP. Eighty percent of respondents reported overall satisfaction with the WI ePDMP, providing responses of “Satisfied” (42%) or “Very Satisfied” (38%). Satisfaction is 86.3% for Healthcare Professional respondents who have the option to access the ePDMP via an EHR interface, which is 9% higher than those who access directly via the ePDMP website (77.2%.)

Among the functionalities available to different types of users, 78% of respondents were “Satisfied or Very Satisfied” with “Querying Patient History” followed by “Account Registration” with 72% “Satisfied or Very satisfied” (Figure 1). For functionalities available specifically for prescribing healthcare professional users, 90% of respondents acknowledged “Patient History Details” as “Useful or Very Useful” in informing their work, followed by “Opioid History in the Last 60 Days Indicator,” which 89% of respondents acknowledged as “Useful or Very Useful,” and “Prescriber-Reported Alerts,” which more than 79% of respondents acknowledged as “Useful or Very Useful” (Figure 2).

Figure 1. How satisfied are you with the following functionalities of the WI ePDMP?

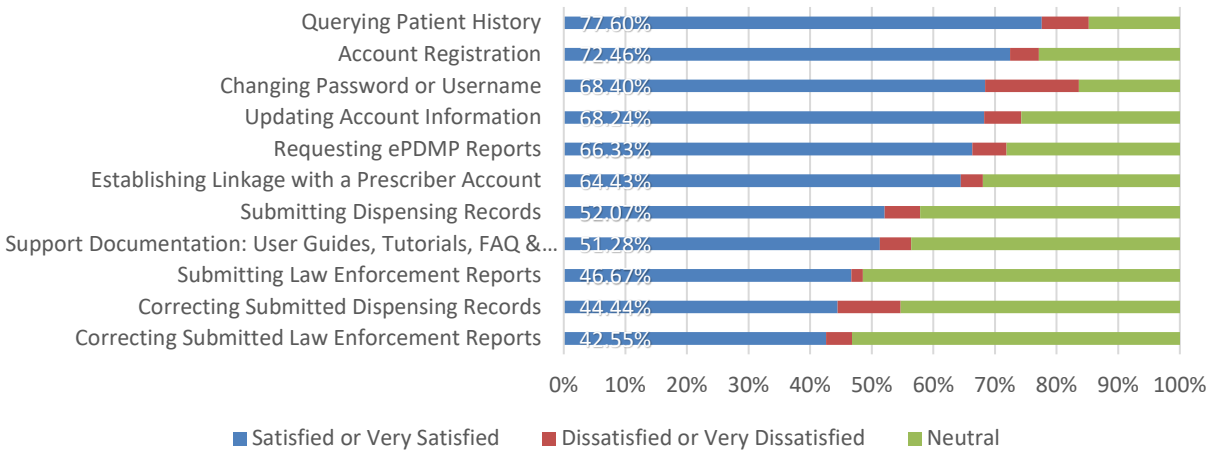
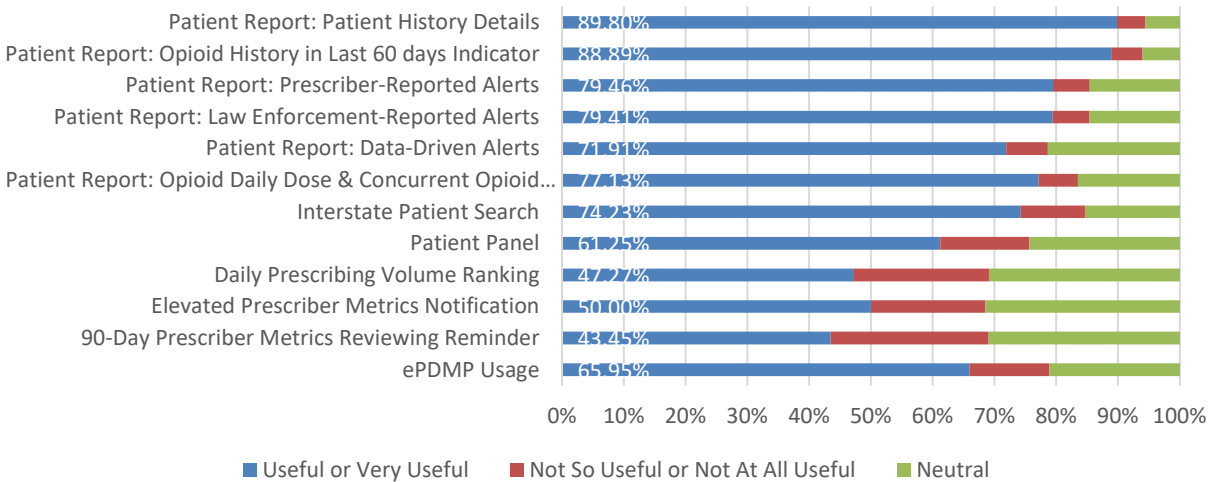


Figure 2. How useful do you find the following features in the WI ePDMP in informing your work?



Actions that prescribers reported having taken as a result of using WI ePDMP information in the past twelve months including “Confirmed that a patient was not misusing prescriptions” (70%), “Spoke with a patient about controlled substance use”(54%), “Denied or modified a prescription for a patient” (48%), “Contacted a patient's prescribers or pharmacies” (44%), and “Confirmed that a patient had other prescribers that patient had not previously disclosed” (39%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Actions prescribers have taken in the past 12 months as a result of using WI ePDMP information

Confirmed that a patient was not misusing prescriptions	70.2%
Spoke with a patient about controlled substance use	53.9%
Denied or modified a prescription for a patient	47.8%
Contacted a patient's prescribers or pharmacies	44.4%
Confirmed that a patient had other prescribers that patient had not previously disclosed	39.3%
Referred a patient to or recommended pain management	24.2%
Referred a patient to or recommended behavioral health treatment services	8.4%
Referred a patient to or recommended substance abuse treatment	7.3%
Dismissed a patient from care	2.8%
Contacted law enforcement regarding an event detailed in law enforcement alert	0.0%

Impact on Referrals for Investigation

Pursuant to s. 961.385 (2) (f) and (3) (c), Wis. Stats., the CSB may disclose PDMP data to a licensing or regulatory board and refer for discipline a pharmacist, pharmacy, or practitioner who fails to comply with the rules of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program or if circumstances indicate suspicious or critically dangerous conduct or practices of a pharmacy, pharmacist, practitioner, or patient. In 2018, the CSB Referral Criteria Workgroup was formed to develop recommendations for how the CSB could define suspicious or critically dangerous conduct or practices.

The CSB Referral Criteria Workgroup continued to meet in 2023 to refine the process for using PDMP data to proactively monitor licensees and their prescribing practices for suspicious or critically dangerous conduct or practices and to determine when such activity should result in a referral to the appropriate examining board. Results of the current investigations will also be used by the CSB Referral Criteria Workgroup to guide the process of proactive monitoring and referrals.

In 2023, the CSB Workgroup reviewed summaries of the PDMP dispensing data specific to professionals associated with the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board (MEB), Physician Assistant Affiliated Credentialing Board (PAACB), Dentistry Examining Board (DEB), and Board of Nursing (BON) in March, September, and December. Based on the data presented, the following actions occurred:

- Sixteen of the top prescribing physicians were referred to the MEB.
- Six of the top prescribing Physician Assistants (PA) were referred to the PAACB.
- Five of the top prescribing Advanced Practice Nurse Prescribers (APNP) were referred to the BON.
- Twelve dentists were referred for their lack of ePDMP usage prior to issuing a monitored drug prescription required of PDMP review.

In Q4 2023 alone, based on the Workgroup recommendations, the Controlled Substances Board made the following referrals:

- Five of the top prescribing physicians were referred to the MEB.
- Five of the top prescribing Physician Assistants (PA) were referred to the PAACB.
- Five of the top prescribing Advanced Practice Nurse Prescribers (APNP) were referred to the BON.

Additionally, the CSB conducts audits of dispenser requirements with the requirement to submit dispensing data to the WI ePDMP. Targeted outreach efforts are made after each audit to bring all non-exempt licensed pharmacies into compliance with the requirement to submit and correct dispensing data. Pharmacies that appear to remain out of compliance after multiple outreach attempts are referred to the Pharmacy Examining Board (PEB). In Q1 2020, 23 pharmacies were identified for referral for possible noncompliance. After a pandemic induced pause, dispenser audits are expected to resume in 2025.

Monitored Prescription Drug Dispensing Trend

For 2023, the annual dispensing of monitored prescription drugs, defined as controlled substances in Schedules II-V or drugs identified by the Board as having a substantial potential for abuse, has a decrease of 1.1% compared to 2022 and a 4.2% decrease since 2017 (Figure 3). The breakdown of the annual dispensing by drug classes shows some promising trends of opioid and benzodiazepine whereas the increasing trend of stimulant dispensing continued (Figure 4). A 4.5% increase was also found in the “other” drug class which includes gabapentin that became a new monitored prescription drug effective September 1st 2021. The total increase of gabapentin dispensings (51,850) comprised 47% of the total increase in the “other” drug class (111,078) from 2022 to 2023.

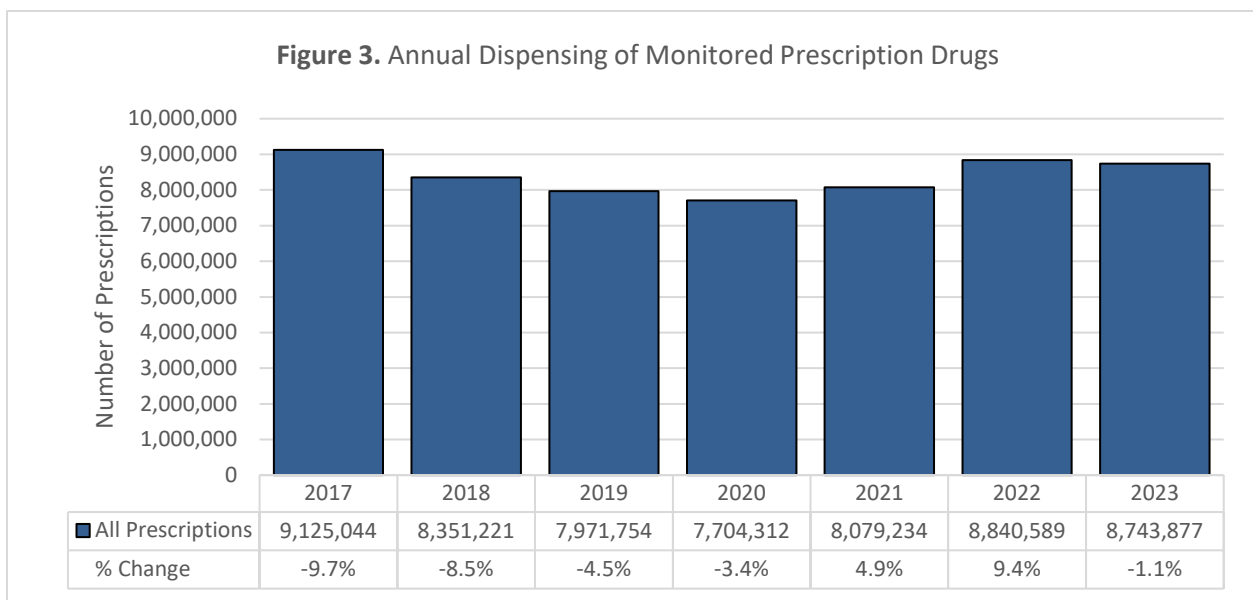
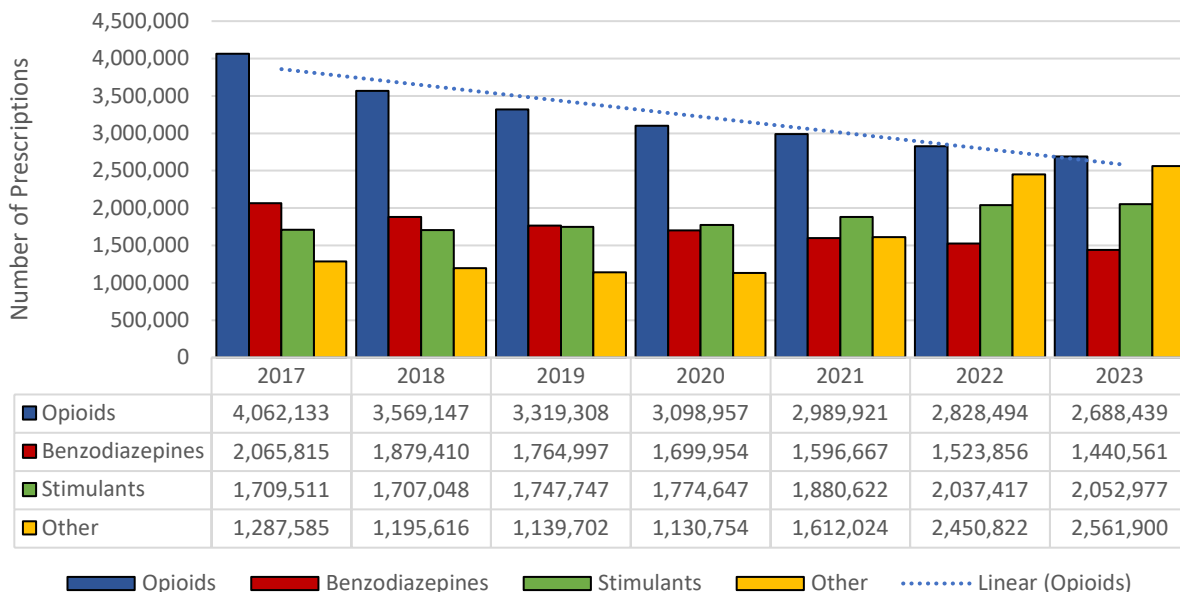
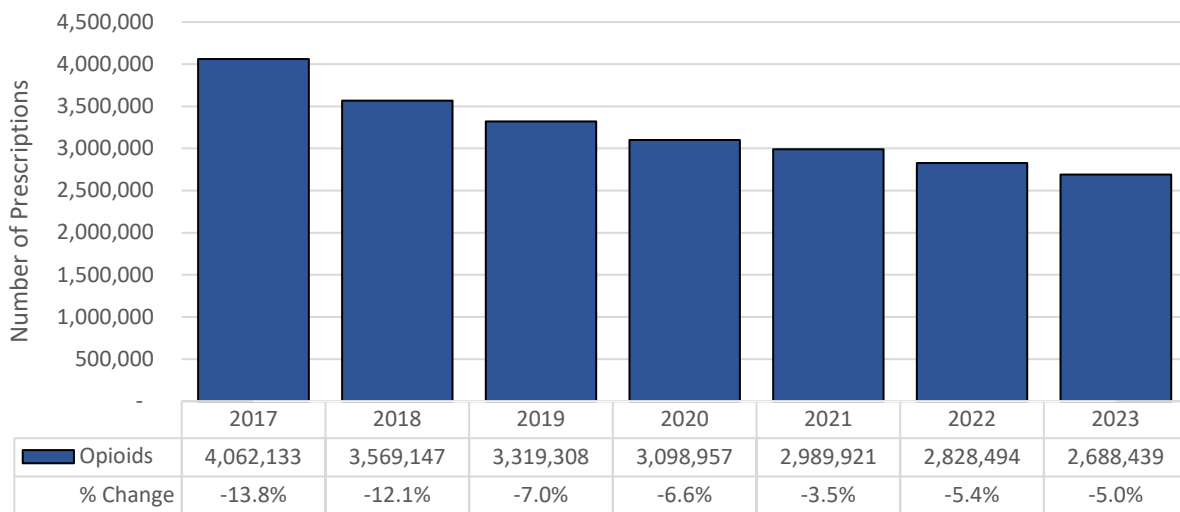


Figure 4. Dispensing of Monitored Prescriptions by Year

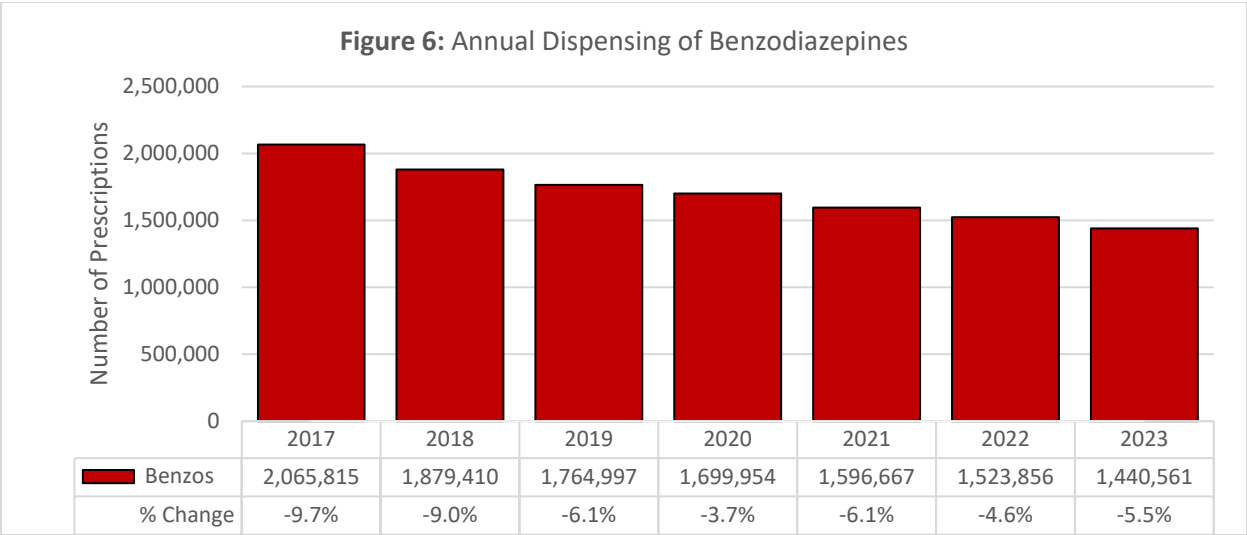


The annual dispensing of opioids decreased by 5% from 2022 to 2023 and 33.8% in the past seven years since 2017 (Figure 5).

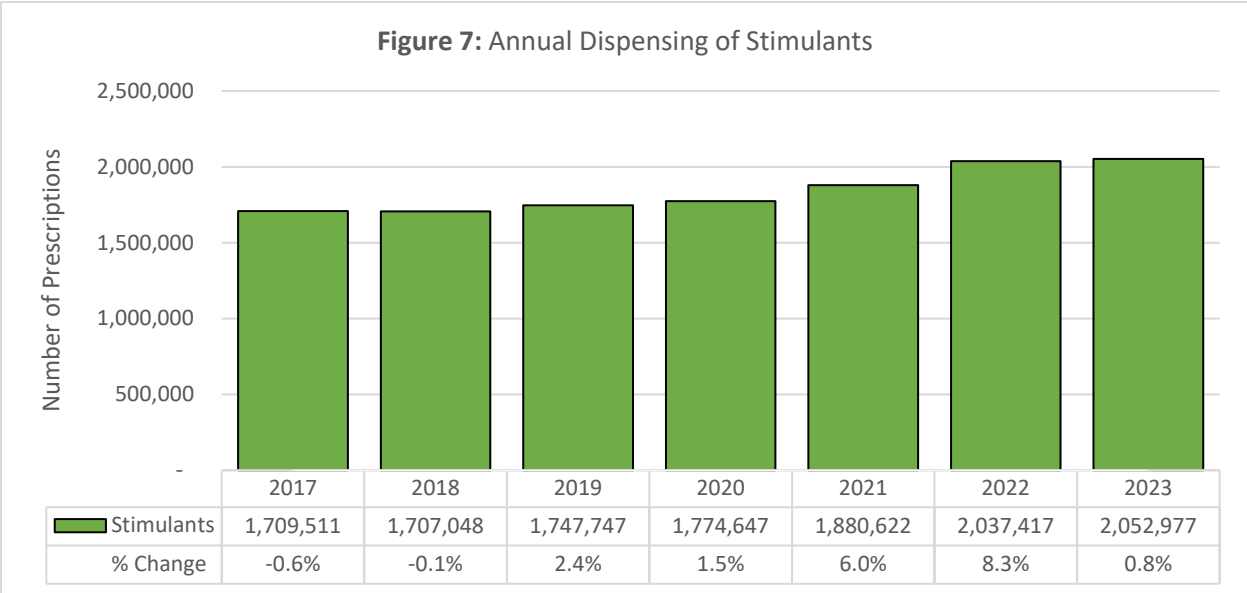
Figure 5: Annual Dispensing of Opioids



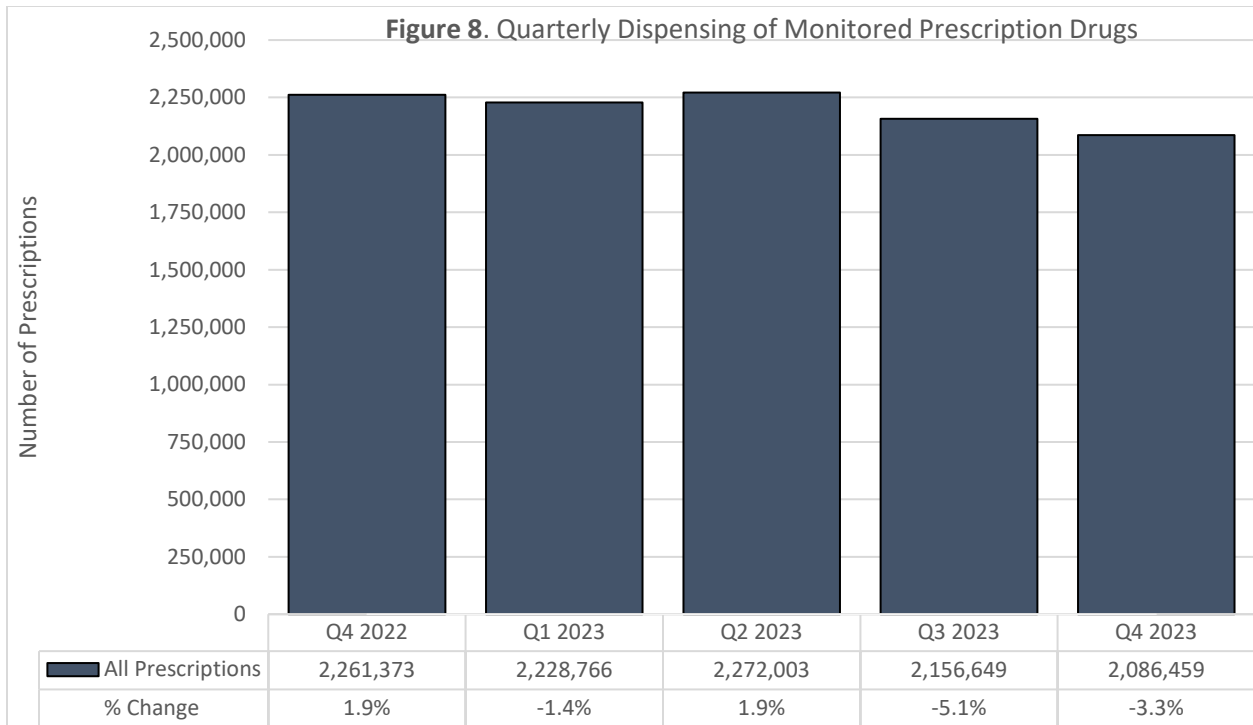
The annual dispensing of benzodiazepines decreased by 5.5% and 30.3% since 2017 (Figure 6).



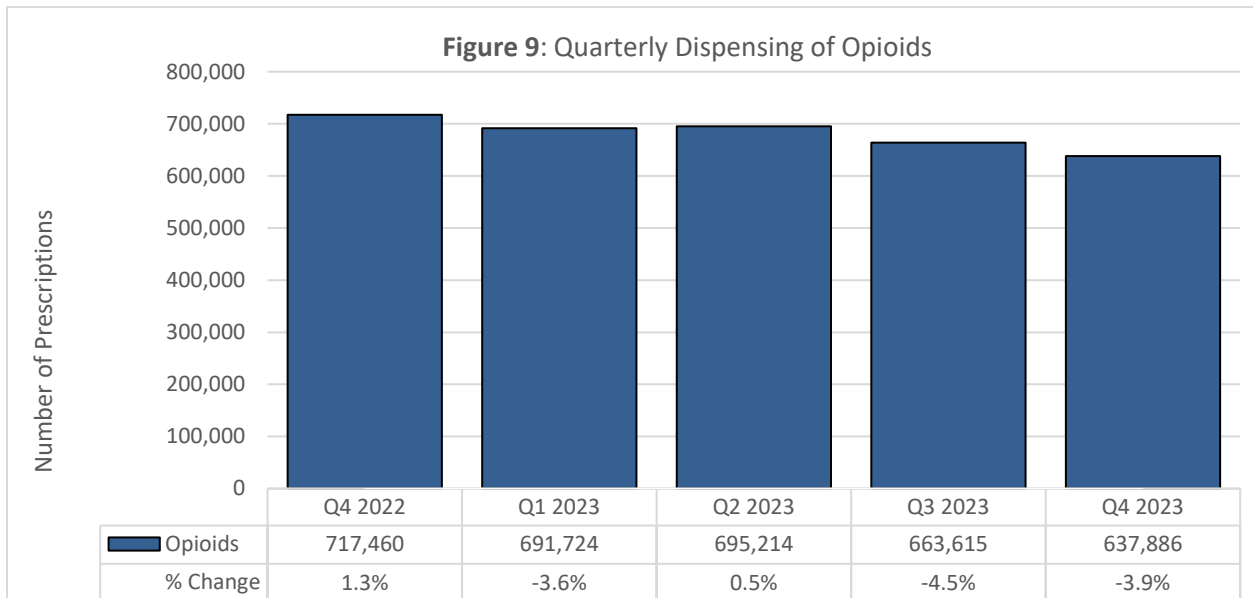
A slight increase was seen with stimulant dispensations between 2022 and 2023 by 0.8%, and 20.1% since 2017 (Figure 7).



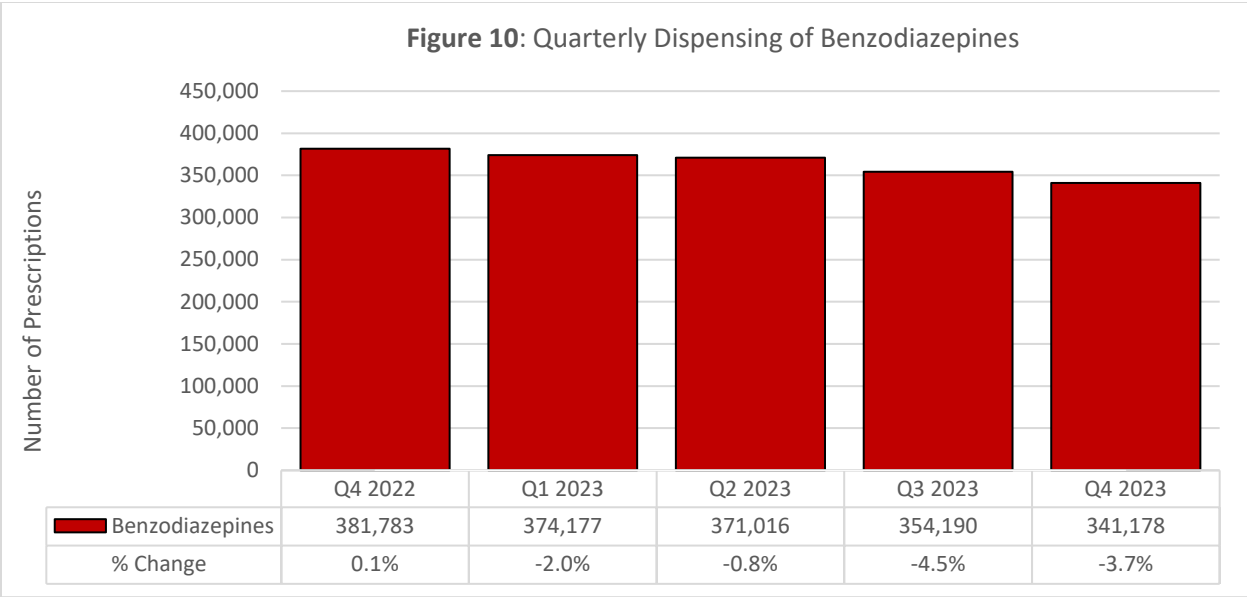
Quarterly data from the ePDMP show that dispensing of all monitored prescription drugs from Q3 to Q4 2023 decreased by 3.3% (Figure 8). Decreases in dispensing were seen across all drug classifications. During Q4 2023, a total of 1,147 pharmacies and 58 dispensing practitioners reported dispensing of monitored drugs to the ePDMP, including 767 in-state pharmacies, 380 out-of-state pharmacies, 24 Physician MDs, 14 Dentists, 11 Advanced Practice Nurse Prescribers, 7 Physician Assistants, and 2 Physician DOs.



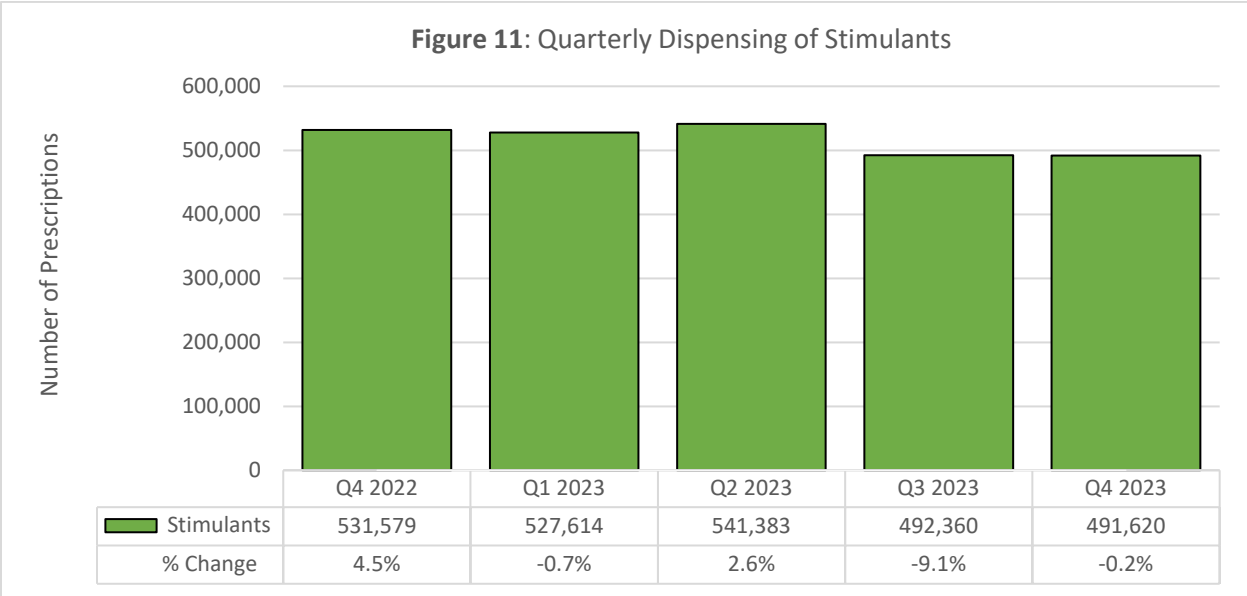
Quarterly dispensing of opioids from Q3 2023 to Q4 2023 decreased by 3.9% (Figure 9). Q4 2023 dispensing equated to a 11.1% reduction from the dispensing of opioids in the same quarter in 2022.



Quarterly dispensing of benzodiazepines from Q3 2023 to Q4 2023 decreased by 3.7% (Figure 10). Q4 2023 dispensing equated to a 10.6% reduction from the dispensing of benzodiazepines in the same quarter in 2022.



The quarterly dispensing of stimulants decreased slightly by 0.2% between Q3 2023 and Q4 2023 and by 7.5% compared to the same quarter in 2022 (Figure 11).



Top 15 Dispensed Monitored Prescription Drugs

Table 2 shows the annual top 15 most dispensed monitored prescription drugs in 2023 compared to 2022, ranked in order of the number of prescriptions dispensed in 2023. In general, the top 15 drugs have remained the same in the past two years with some changes in the ranking.

Overall dispensing of the most prescribed opioids and benzodiazepines has decreased, but dispensing of stimulants and others has increased. The largest decreases were found in oxycodone w/ acetaminophen

(8.4%), amphetamine-dextroamphetamine (7.4%), and hydrocodone-acetaminophen (7.3%). The largest increase in dispensing was found with lisdexamfetamine dimesylate (9.4%), which is a stimulant, whereas the other two most prescribed stimulants both saw a decreasing trend in dispensing including amphetamine-dextroamphetamine (7.4%) and methylphenidate HCl (2.1%).

Table 2. Annual Top 15 Dispensed Monitored Prescription Drug by Dispensing

	Drug Name	Drug Class	2022 Dispensing	2023 Dispensing	Percent Change
1	Gabapentin	Other	1,336,660	1,388,510	3.9%
2	Amphetamine- Dextroamphetamine	Stimulant	937,068	868,094	-7.4%
3	Hydrocodone- Acetaminophen	Opioid	881,352	817,221	-7.3%
4	Lisdexamfetamine Dimesylate	Stimulant	484,825	530,176	9.4%
5	Tramadol HCl	Opioid	558,614	522,556	-6.5%
6	Oxycodone HCl	Opioid	510,944	519,925	1.8%
7	Lorazepam	Benzodiazepine	484,277	460,004	-5.0%
8	Methylphenidate HCl	Stimulant	439,692	430,391	-2.1%
9	Alprazolam	Benzodiazepine	448,422	416,041	-7.2%
10	Clonazepam	Benzodiazepine	405,993	381,440	-6.0%
11	Zolpidem Tartrate	Other	383,638	363,188	-5.3%
12	Pregabalin	Other	302,242	326,487	8.0%
13	Buprenorphine HCl- Naloxone HCl Dihydrate	Opioid	247,453	245,065	-1.0%
14	Oxycodone w/ Acetaminophen	Opioid	251,055	230,008	-8.4%
15	Diazepam	Benzodiazepine	159,020	148,329	-6.7%

Table 3 shows the quarterly data of top 15 most dispensed monitored prescription drugs in Q4 2023 compared to Q3 2023, ranked in order of the number of prescriptions dispensed in Q4 2023. The order of the top 15 drugs dispensed in recent quarters has been consistent overall until Q3 2021, during which gabapentin became a newly monitored drug. Gabapentin was the most prescribed monitored drug in Q4 2021 after joining the list in Q3 2021 for the first time. Gabapentin was also the most prescribed monitored drug of Q4 2023 but saw a decrease of 5.4% in dispensing. The top 15 drugs make up nearly 88% of the dispensing of monitored prescription drugs for any given quarter.

Each drug in the Opioid classification of the top 15 drugs saw a decrease in dispensing in Q4 2023. This includes morphine sulfate (5.9%), hydrocodone-acetaminophen (4.2%), tramadol HCl (3.3%), oxycodone with acetaminophen (2.8%), and oxycodone HCl (1.3%).

The dispensing of buprenorphine HCl-naloxone HCl dihydrate is the 13th most dispensed monitored prescription drug in Q4 2023 with a decrease (5.8%) from Q3 2023. Buprenorphine HCl-naloxone HCl dihydrate is one of the medications commonly used as part of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder. Note that this does not include dispensing that occurs at most opioid treatment programs due to federal regulation 42 CFR Part 2, which has been revised in 2022 to permit federally

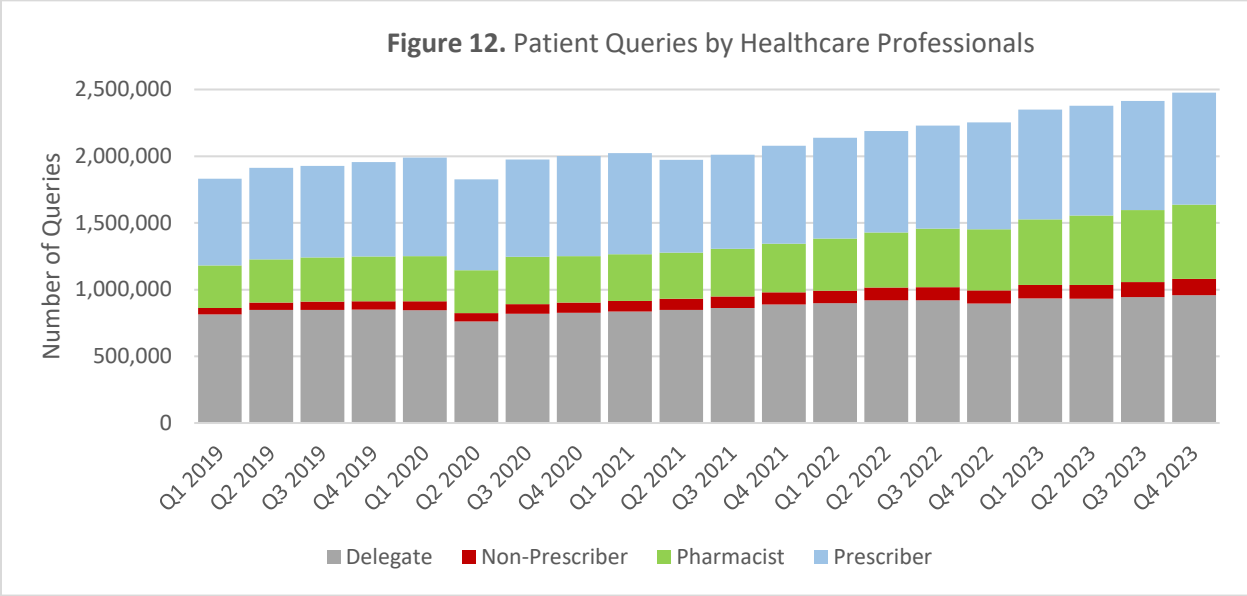
funded opioid treatment programs to report dispensing data to state PDMPs pending patient consent in writing and mandates to report pursuant to the state statutes. Among the Stimulant classification, there was a decrease in the dispensing of amphetamine-dextroamphetamine (1.7%) from Q3 2023 to Q4 2023. Increases were seen in the dispensation of lisdextroamphetamine-dimesylate (1.5%) and methylphenidate HCl (3.0%) in the same quarter.

Table 3. Q4 2023 Top 15 Dispensed Monitored Prescription Drug by Dispensing

	Drug Name	Drug Class	Q3 2023 Dispensing	Q4 2023 Dispensing	Percent Change
1	Gabapentin	Other	349,238	330,389	-5.4%
2	Amphetamine- Dextroamphetamine	Stimulant	213,861	210,264	-1.7%
3	Hydrocodone- Acetaminophen	Opioid	202,205	193,720	-4.2%
4	Lisdexamfetamine Dimesylate	Stimulant	129,443	131,357	1.5%
5	Oxycodone HCl	Opioid	128,312	126,656	-1.3%
6	Tramadol HCl	Opioid	129,031	124,773	-3.3%
7	Lorazepam	Benzodiazepine	113,174	108,135	-4.5%
8	Methylphenidate HCl	Stimulant	101,506	104,518	3.0%
9	Alprazolam	Benzodiazepine	102,498	99,789	-2.6%
10	Clonazepam	Benzodiazepine	94,052	91,452	-2.8%
11	Zolpidem Tartrate	Other	89,810	87,698	-2.4%
12	Pregabalin	Other	82,289	80,961	-1.6%
13	Buprenorphine HCl- Naloxone HCl Dihydrate	Opioid	61,415	57,833	-5.8%
14	Oxycodone w/ Acetaminophen	Opioid	56,426	54,846	-2.8%
15	Morphine Sulfate	Opioid	28,185	26,518	-5.9%

Disclosure of WI PDMP Data

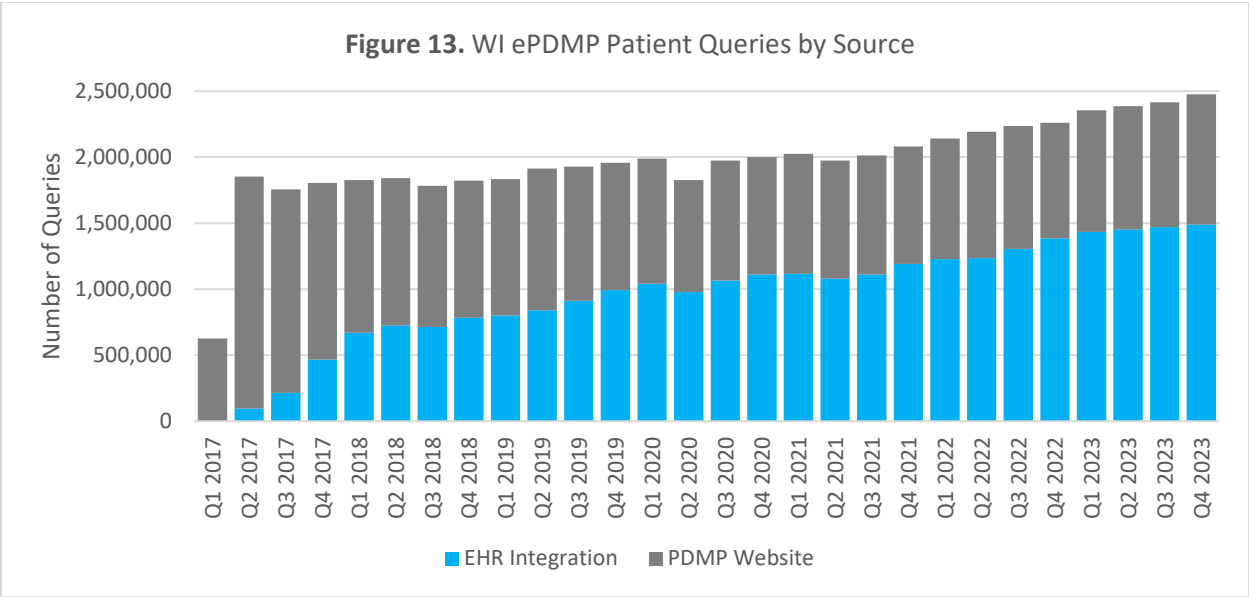
In 2023, healthcare users made 9,619,315 patient queries in the WI ePDMP, which is an increase of 9% compared to 2022. Between October 1 and December 31, (Q4) 2023, healthcare users made a total of 2,475,308 patient queries, a 2.5% increase compared to Q3 2023 (Figure 12). Breaking down the queries by user type shows that 39% of the queries were performed by delegates of prescribers or pharmacists, 34% were performed by prescribers, 23% by pharmacists, and 5% by other non-prescribing healthcare professionals.



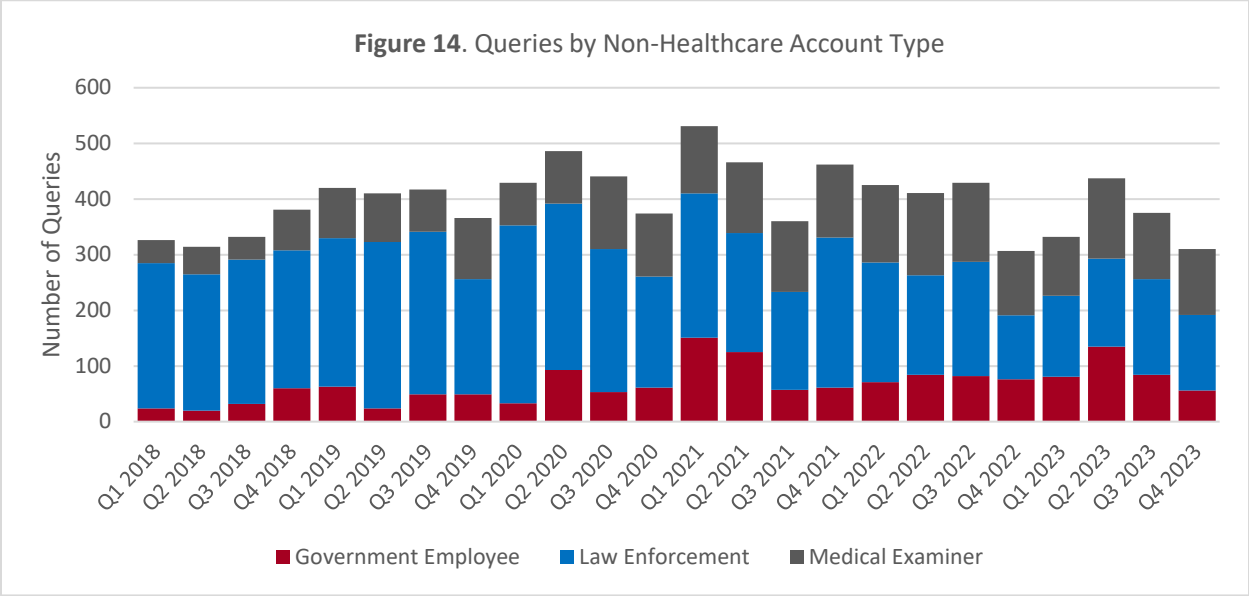
Utilizing the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy’s PMP InterConnect (PMPi) and the RxCheck interstate data sharing hub, the WI ePDMP is now connected with 29 state PDMPs as well as the Military Health System. The interstate data exchange allows healthcare users to expand the WI ePDMP patient query to return results from PDMPs in other states, including Wisconsin’s border states of Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, and Indiana.

Healthcare professionals from 25 health systems in addition to more than 30 facilities and small practices in Wisconsin now have one-click access to the PDMP from within their electronic health record (EHR) platform to facilitate patient queries within a provider’s busy workflow. In 2022, the PDMP began to allow healthcare organizations to access ePDMP data via electronic health record (EHR) without the payment of monthly subscription fees. This will continue to greatly benefit under-resourced and rural healthcare facilities.

Figure 13 below shows that, in Q4 2023, 60.2% of patient queries were through the direct EHR integration, which is up from 51% in Q4 2019, the first quarter where EHR integration accounted for more than 50% of queries.



Authorized individuals from non-healthcare groups made a total of 310 requests for PDMP data in Q4 2023, which is a 17% decrease from the previous quarter (Figure 14). Authorized law enforcement users made up the largest proportion of the total non-healthcare queries (44%).



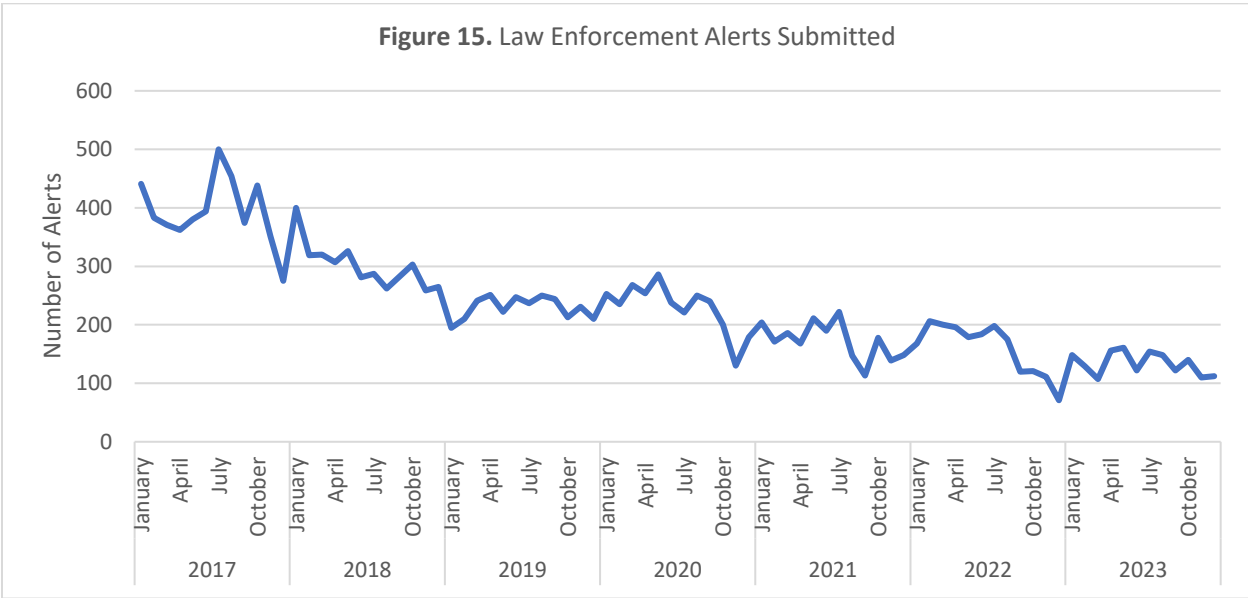
Law Enforcement Reports

During 2023, there were 1,609 events reported to the WI ePDMP by Wisconsin law enforcement agencies, which was a 17% decrease from 1,929 reported events in 2022 and a 66% decrease compared to 2017 when the data was first made available.

In Q4 2023, there were 362 events reported to the WI ePDMP by Wisconsin law enforcement agencies as required by s. 961.37 (3) (a), Wis. Stat. The law requires the agencies to submit a report in each of the following situations:

1. When a law enforcement officer receives a report of a stolen controlled substance prescription.
2. When a law enforcement officer reasonably suspects that a violation of the Controlled Substances Act involving a prescribed drug is occurring or has occurred.
3. When a law enforcement officer believes someone is undergoing or has immediately prior experienced an opioid-related drug overdose.
4. When a law enforcement officer believes someone died as a result of using a narcotic drug.

Prescribers of patients associated with these events receive a proactive email notice from the WI ePDMP, in addition to the event being captured as an alert on the patient report in the WI ePDMP. Figure 15 shows the number of law enforcement reports submitted to the WI ePDMP by month since the WI ePDMP was launched. There is no statutory requirement for law enforcement agencies to submit their reports within a certain timeframe after the date of the event, and outreach efforts continue to emphasize the value that law enforcement reporting brings for healthcare clinical decision making.



The distribution of submission by report type remains fairly consistent from one quarter to the next. Among the total 1,609 alerts submitted by Law Enforcement entities in 2023, The distribution by report type can be seen below:

- 43% of the reports submitted were for suspected non-fatal opioid-related overdose events, which was a decrease from 50% in 2022.
- 30% of the reports submitted were reports of stolen controlled substance prescriptions, which was a slight increase from 29% in 2022.
- 16% of the reports submitted were for suspected violations of the Controlled Substances Act, which was a slight increase from 15% in 2022.
- 11% of the reports submitted were for suspected narcotic-related deaths, which was a slight increase from 9% in 2022.

Summary

The 2023 annual dispensing of monitored prescription drugs has a decrease of 1.1% compared to 2022 and a 4.2% decrease since 2017. The breakdown of the drug classes shows promising trends in Wisconsin. Specifically, the annual dispensing of opioids decreased by 5% from 2022 to 2023 and a notable 33.8% decrease in the past six years since 2017. The annual dispensing of benzodiazepines decreased by 5.5% and 30.3% since 2017. The increasing trend in stimulant dispensing continued in 2023 by 0.8% compared to 2022 and 20.1% in the past six years since 2017. There is a notable increase of the “other” drug class (4.5%) which includes gabapentin that became a new monitored prescription drug effective September 1st, 2021. The total increase of gabapentin dispensation (51,850) comprised 47% of the total increase in the “other” drug class (111,078) from 2022 to 2023.

The number of patient queries performed per month has remained consistent. The number of queries made by healthcare professionals and delegates increased by 9% from 2022 to 2023. The result of user surveys that the DSPS conducted throughout 2023 shows an average of 80% survey participants are satisfied with the program and the satisfaction rate increases to an average of 86% for respondents who have the option to access the ePDMP via an EHR interface. This indicates that the WI ePDMP continues to be a valuable tool to support safe prescribing, treatment, and dispensing decisions.

From Q3 2023 to Q4 2023, the quarterly dispensing of all monitored prescription drugs decreased by 3.3%, which equated to a decrease of 7.7% compared to the same quarter in 2022. Decreases in dispensing were seen across all drug classifications including Opioids (3.9%), Benzodiazepines (3.7%), Stimulants (0.2%), and Other (4.8%). Gabapentin has continued to be the top dispensed monitored drug since Q4 2021 when gabapentin first became the most dispensed monitored drug. Gabapentin became a monitored prescription drug on September 1, 2021, after being identified by the Board as having a substantial potential for abuse. During Q4 2023, Gabapentin remained the most prescribed monitored drug but saw a decrease of 5.4% in dispensing from Q3 2023.

Compared to the same quarter in 2017, the overall dispensing of monitored prescription drugs in Q4 2023 had a decrease of 4.4%. The breakdown by drug classes showed decreases in opioid and benzodiazepine dispensing and an increase in stimulants.

- The number of opioid prescriptions dispensed in Q4 2023 was notably 33%, or over 315,000 prescriptions, less than the number in Q4 2017.
- The number of benzodiazepine prescriptions dispensed in Q4 2023 was notably 31%, or around 152,000 prescriptions, less than the number in Q4 2017.
- The number of stimulant prescriptions dispensed in Q4 2023 was 16%, or around 68,000 prescriptions, more than the number in Q4 2017.

Encouraging trends found in the WI ePDMP continued in Q4 2023:

- Overall dispensings of the most prescribed opioids and benzodiazepine have decreased. The largest decreases were found in oxycodone w/ acetaminophen (9.8%), hydrocodone-acetaminophen (7.3%), and tramadol HCl (5.9%).

- The dispensing of buprenorphine HCl-naloxone HCl dihydrate, one of the medications commonly used as part of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder, was the 13th most dispensed monitored prescription drug in Q4 2023. Its dispensing in Q4 had a decrease (-5.8%) from Q3 2023 which equated to a decrease of 8.6% over the past 12 months and a notable 46.9% increase since Q3 2018, the first quarter it moved into the top 15 dispensed monitored prescription drugs.

Additional detail about the WI ePDMP data, including county-level detail for many of the charts, can be found on the WI ePDMP Public Statistics Dashboard (<https://pdmp.wi.gov/statistics>), under the corresponding tabs of Monitored Prescription Drugs Dispensed, PDMP Utilization, and Law Enforcement Alerts.