



---

PRESS RELEASE—CONTACT DPS NEWSROOM AT (608) 576-2491

August 11, 2020

## **Wisconsin Controlled Substances Board Releases Q2 Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Report, Documents Significant Five-year Improvements in Prescribing Practices**

**MADISON, Wis.** – Wisconsin opioid prescriptions remain largely consistent across Wisconsin from the first to the second quarter of 2020, according to the most recent [Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program](#) (ePDMP) report released by the Wisconsin Controlled Substances Board. Dispensing of all monitored drugs is down .7% from the first quarter of the year and is down .78% from the second quarter of 2019. Opioid dispensing is down 3.3%, or 26,883 prescriptions, from the second quarter of 2019.

More dramatic are the five-year quarter-to-quarter comparisons, which show significant reductions in prescribing over the last half-decade. Dispensing of all monitored prescription drugs is 25% lower in the second quarter of 2020 than it was in the second quarter of 2015. The number of opioid prescriptions was 40%, or nearly 475,000 prescriptions, lower than in Q2 of 2015. Another encouraging trend is the increase in Buprenorphine HCl-Naloxone HCl Dihydrate (Suboxone®) dispensing, as the drug is one of the medications commonly used in Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder. Dispensing for the drug increased by 1.5% for Q2 of 2020 over Q2 of 2019. This amounts to an increase of 23% over the past 12 months and 47% since the first quarter of 2016.

“The Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program continues to make a positive impact on prescribing practices in Wisconsin,” said Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dawn Crim. “The opioid epidemic remains a challenge for Wisconsin, and responsible prescribing and dispensing remain critical to our state’s multi-faceted public health campaign to reduce opioid use, overdoses, and death.”

While the report shows consistent progress in informing provider prescribing culture, the COVID-19 pandemic has undermined other progress. For example, the Department of Health Services recently reported that second quarter overdoses are more than double what they were in the second quarter of last year.

“While prescription opioids are only part of the total picture,” Crim said, “the quarterly reports have shown that through our ongoing, diligent work in partnership with the CSB, we can bring about change and make a difference for Wisconsin patients and providers. We are excited about building on these efforts as we continue to fight this epidemic.”

Launched in 2013, the ePDMP is an online database and dashboard that puts patient prescription and overdose information at prescribers’ fingertips. With this real-time awareness of which providers a patient is seeing and what drugs they are taking, prescribers can make better informed decisions about whether to prescribe pain medications. The ePDMP also has other valuable functionality, including analytics-driven alerts that inform prescribers of certain risk factors, including recent use of multiple prescribers or pharmacies, early refills, or concurrent benzodiazepine and opioid prescriptions. The system also alerts prescribers with law-enforcement information, such as an individual’s opioid-related overdose events or suspected violations of the controlled substances act.

The Controlled Substances Board releases ePDMP [reports](#) quarterly and annually, while DSPS operates the program. The [statistics dashboard](#) allows public health officials and researchers to quickly and efficiently access data about the controlled substances dispensed to Wisconsinites, the use of the ePDMP, and law enforcement trends. The ePDMP is connected to 26 other state PDMPs, including those of bordering states Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa.

###

Jennifer Garrett, Communications Director, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, (608) 576-2491, [Jennifer.garrett@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jennifer.garrett@wisconsin.gov)