



OHIO AUTOMATED RX REPORTING SYSTEM

SEMIANNUAL REPORT ON OPIOID PRESCRIBING IN OHIO

JUNE 2015



STATE OF
OHIO
BOARD OF PHARMACY

Steven W. Schierholt, Esq.
Executive Director

Dear Governor Kasich and Members of the Ohio General Assembly,

Drug overdose deaths continue to be a public health crisis in Ohio. The number of Ohioans who have died from drug overdoses increased 366 percent from 1999 to 2013. The most recent data from 2013 found that unintentional drug overdoses were responsible for 2,110 deaths of Ohio residents. This is the highest number of deaths on record for drug overdose and surpasses the previous highest number (1,914) in 2012 by 10.2 percent. The dramatic increase in overdose deaths over the past 15 years is driven largely by prescription drugs including opioid pain medications (such as oxycodone, methadone, hydrocodone and morphine), which contributed to 838 deaths in 2013.

To address the growing misuse and diversion of prescription drugs, the Ohio General Assembly adopted legislation in 2004 authorizing the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy to create a Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), known as the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS). Established in 2006, OARRS collects information on all outpatient prescriptions for controlled substances dispensed by Ohio-licensed pharmacies and personally furnished by licensed prescribers in Ohio. Drug wholesalers are also required to submit information on all controlled substances sold to an Ohio licensed pharmacy or prescriber. The data is reported every 24 hours and is maintained in a secure database.

OARRS is a tool that can be used to address prescription drug diversion and abuse. It serves multiple functions, including: patient care tool; drug epidemic early warning system; and drug diversion and insurance fraud investigative tool. As the only statewide electronic database that stores all controlled substance dispensing and personal furnishing information, OARRS helps prescribers and pharmacists avoid potentially life-threatening drug interactions as well as identify individuals fraudulently obtaining controlled substances from multiple health care providers, a practice commonly referred to as "doctor shopping." It can also be used by professional licensing boards to identify or investigate clinicians with patterns of inappropriate prescribing and dispensing, and to assist law enforcement in cases of controlled substance diversion.

Pursuant to section 4729.85 of the Revised Code, the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy respectfully submits the following semiannual report on opioid pain relievers dispensed by Ohio pharmacies or personally furnished by prescribers. The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1 - Opioid prescriptions dispensed by pharmacies to Ohio patients; and
- Section 2 - Opioid pain relievers that have been personally furnished to a patient by an Ohio prescriber, other than a prescriber who is a veterinarian.
- Section 3 - OARRS registration and usage statistics.

In accordance with section 4729.85, this report will also be disseminated to the Ohio Attorney General, the Department of Public Safety, the State Dental Board, the Board of Nursing, the State Board of Optometry, the State Medical Board and the State Veterinary Medical Licensing Board.

On behalf of the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy, I thank you for your leadership on this important public health and safety issue. The Board is committed to its ongoing efforts to further enhance the features and functionality of OARRS in our mission to prevent the abuse and diversion of controlled substances.

If you have any questions regarding the work of the Board, please do not hesitate to contact my office by phone (614-466-4143) or by e-mail: contact@pharmacy.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,



Steven W. Schierholt, Esq.
Executive Director
State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy

Section 1: Opioid Prescriptions Dispensed by Pharmacies to Ohio Patients

Pursuant to section 4729.85 of the Revised Code, the Board is required to report opioid prescriptions dispensed by pharmacies to Ohio patients (See Table #1), including all of the following information:

- The number of prescribers who issued prescriptions for opioid pain relievers;
- The number of patients to whom opioid pain relievers were dispensed;
- The average quantity of opioid pain relievers dispensed per prescription;
- The average daily morphine equivalent dose (MED) of the opioid pain relievers dispensed per prescription (See MED definition below).

Table #1. Opioids Dispensed by Pharmacies to Ohio Patients, by Year

Year	No. of Prescribers	No. of Patients	Average Quantity Per Prescription	Average Daily MED per Prescription
January 2010 - June 2010	45,343	1,820,871	63	56
July 2010 - December 2010	47,050	1,862,918	64	55
January 2011 - June 2011	51,954	1,842,313	64	51
July 2011 - December 2011	54,757	1,877,594	64	51
January 2012 - June 2012	53,834	1,903,301	64	51
July 2012 - December 2012	54,522	1,998,298	64	51
January 2013 - June 2013	52,965	1,820,194	64	51
July 2013 - December 2013	54,252	1,826,812	64	50
January 2014 - June 2014	52,393	1,797,684	63	50
July 2014 - December 2014	51,168	1,812,593	62	50

WHAT IS A MORPHINE EQUIVALENT DOSE?

A morphine equivalent dose (MED) is the amount of opioid prescription drugs, converted to a common unit (milligrams of morphine), that a patient currently has access to based on the information reported by prescribers and pharmacies to OARRS. Morphine is widely regarded as the “standard” for the treatment of moderate to severe pain and is commonly used as the reference point. As MED increases, the likelihood of an adverse effect increases, therefore identifying at-risk patients is a crucial first step towards improving patient safety. OARRS utilizes a chart of conversion factors created by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Section 2: Opioids Personally Furnished by Ohio Prescribers

Pursuant to section 4729.85 of the Revised Code, the Board is required to report on the number of opioid pain relievers that have been personally furnished to a patient by an Ohio prescriber (See Table #2), including all of the following information:

- The number of prescribers who personally furnished opioid pain relievers;
- The number of patients to whom the opioid pain relievers were personally furnished;
- The average quantity of the opioid pain relievers that were furnished at one time;
- The average daily morphine equivalent dose (MED) of the opioid pain relievers that were furnished at one time.

Table #2. Opioids Personally Furnished by Ohio Prescribers, by Year

Year	No. of Prescribers	No. of Patients	Average Quantity Per Instance	Average Daily MED per Instance
January 2010 - June 2010	6	857	109	111
July 2010 - December 2010	4	219	104	125
January 2011 - June 2011	23	144	55	75
July 2011 - December 2011	52	326	7	17
January 2012 - June 2012	68	1,207	15	24
July 2012 - December 2012	65	955	15	24
January 2013 - June 2013	57	1,037	10	23
July 2013 - December 2013	61	1,685	6	20
January 2014 - June 2014	84	1,393	7	22
July 2014 - December 2014	52	680	10	25

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DISPENSING AND PERSONALLY FURNISHING?

Dispensing is defined by law as the distribution of drugs by a pharmacist pursuant to a valid prescription from a prescriber. Personally furnishing is defined by law as the distribution of drugs by a prescriber to the prescriber's patients for use outside the prescriber's practice setting. Except in a limited number of circumstances, prescribers are not permitted to personally furnish a controlled substance in excess of a seventy-two-hour supply (ORC 4729.291 - Effective May 20, 2011).

Section 3: OARRS Registration and Usage Statistics

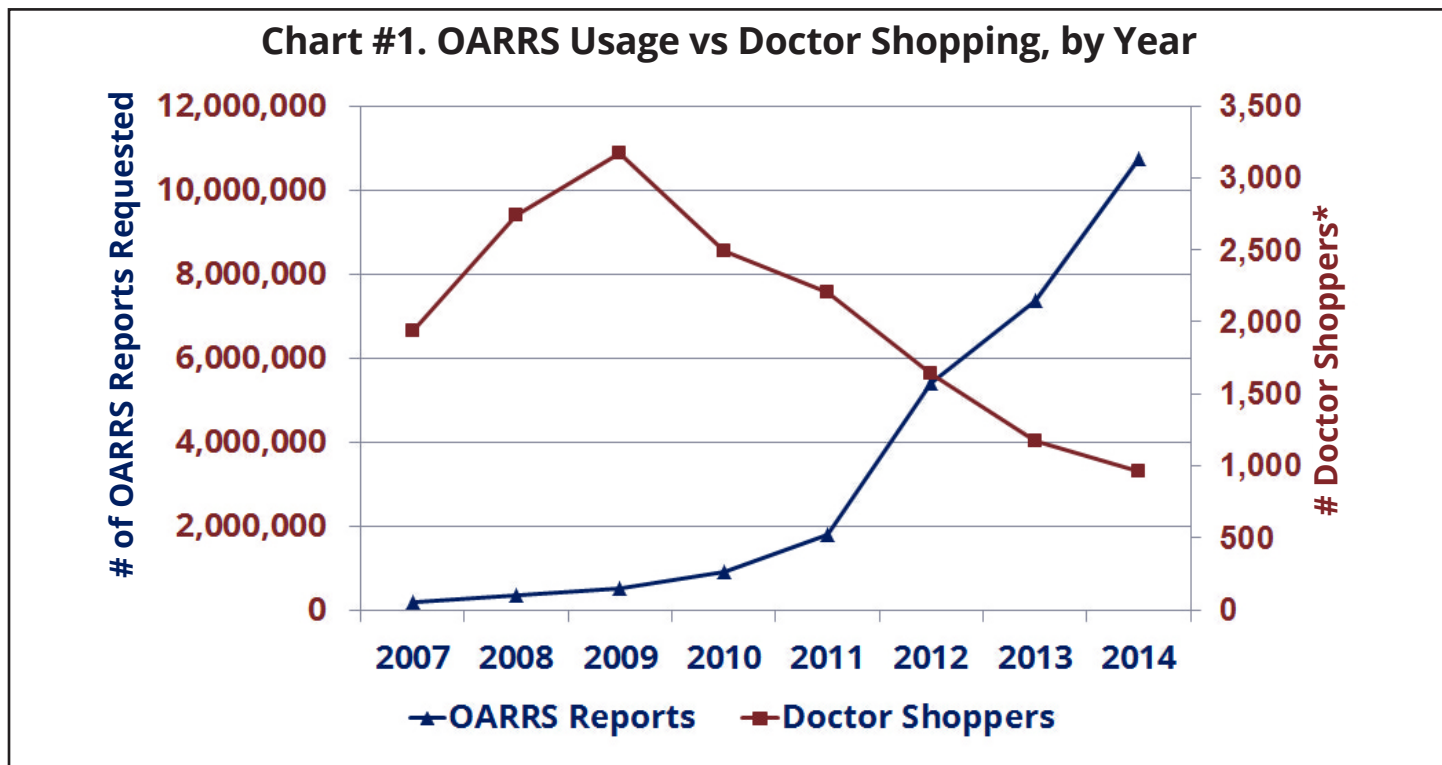
According to data collected by OARRS, 24 percent of all Ohio prescribers are responsible for approximately 84 percent of Ohio’s controlled substance prescriptions. Of these high volume prescribers, 92 percent have an OARRS account (See Table 3).

Table #3. Prescriber OARRS Registration, by Number of Prescriptions

# Controlled Substance Rx Written Annually	1-15	16 - 100	101-500	501+
% of Ohio Prescribers	25%	26%	26%	24%
How much of Ohio’s Rx?	0%	2%	13%	84%
How many have registered for OARRS?	37%	52%	69%	92%

Based on # of Prescriptions written between 4/1/2014 and 3/31/2015 and registrations submitted as of 06/03/2015

Use of OARRS has increased substantially since 2007. The number of reports requested increased more than 5,900 percent between 2007 and 2014. Concurrently, the number of doctor shoppers during the same period has decreased 50 percent (See Chart #1).



*In this chart, a doctor shopper is defined as an individual who visits, at a minimum, five prescribers and five pharmacies in a single month.



The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy is committed to protecting the health and safety of all Ohioans by preventing, detecting and investigating the illegal distribution or abuse of dangerous drugs and regulating the practice of pharmacy. Should you need any assistance or additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Board.

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