

# ISSUES AT A GLANCE

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS

AANP

American Association of  
NURSE PRACTITIONERS®

### WHAT IS IT?

*A Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) is an interactive database that facilitates the sharing of health information related to controlled substance prescriptions. PDMPs provide clinicians with information on a patient's controlled substance prescription history and can be valuable tools when considering treatment options and screening patients who may be at risk for abuse or diversion.*

The prescription history provided by these databases may serve as an important piece of state and national strategies to curb America's growing drug abuse problem. As PDMPs provide a record of filled prescriptions, these tools may offer a more detailed and accurate history than what a patient may self-report. Prescribers using these systems have an opportunity to gain a more comprehensive assessment of medication use and make more informed decisions regarding whether and what to prescribe. PDMPs also play an important role in offering health care providers a way to benchmark and monitor their own prescribing practices.

PDMP programs and requirements for use vary by state, but research shows that these tools can improve provider knowledge about individual patients and impact treatment decisions. PDMP laws are state-specific, but there is growing interest in providing uniform and accessible information across state lines.

### WHERE IS IT?

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have implemented PDMPs. Prescribers and dispensers in each state are subject to state-specific reporting requirements, which may vary by state. Some states mandate prescribers review the PDMP prior to prescribing for every patient; others leave review to the discretion of the prescriber. The American Association of Nurse Practitioners® (AANP) strongly recommends that all nurse practitioners (NPs) carefully review the requirements in their state to ensure compliance with state laws and to fully benefit from the use of these tools.

### HOW WILL IT IMPACT MY PATIENTS AND MY PRACTICE?

PDMPs allow providers to access patient history and resources to analyze prescription fill patterns in a more comprehensive way. The data these tools can offer creates additional opportunities to screen for and discuss concerns about addiction or diversion with patients. This whole-person orientation and approach fits well with the NP model of holistic, patient-centered care.

Some PDMPs allow clinicians the opportunity to monitor their own prescribing patterns. Some state features include integration with other health information technology, such as e-prescribing, or a system that sends letters to prescribers whose prescribing patterns fall outside of peer norms, or systems that flag patients to prescribers when records suggest a patient pattern that may signal abuse or diversion.

AANP encourages NPs to sign up and use their state's PDMP. Links to each state's website are provided below to sign up and check use requirements.

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### **LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [PDMP Training and Technical Assistance Center State Profiles.](#)
- [AANP's Substance Use Disorder Clinical Resources.](#)

For more information on this and other NP practice issues, please visit [aanp.org](https://aanp.org) or contact the AANP State Government Affairs team at [statepolicy@aanp.org](mailto:statepolicy@aanp.org).

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