Electronic Prescriptions for Controlled Substances

Drug Enforcement Administration & Health & Human Services Public Meeting
Arlington, VA
July 11, 2006
Pharmacy Perspectives Panel

Calvin H. Knowlton, RPh, MDiv, PhD
Former President, American Pharmacists Association
and
President & CEO, excelleRx Inc.
Presentation Topics

- Benefits of electronic prescribing
- Strategic considerations for controlled substance prescriptions
- Implementation recommendations
Benefits of E-Prescribing

- Efficiencies in the health care system
  - Improved access to:
    - Patient medical records
    - Drug utilization history
    - Drug interactions
    - Health insurance
    - Therapeutic alternatives
Benefits of E-Prescribing (cont.)

- Reduce medication errors
- Reduce prescription forgeries
- Improve recordkeeping controls
- Enhanced enforcement
- Reduce overall costs
- Speed access to needed medications
- Detect fraud and abuse
Benefits of E-Prescribing (cont.)

- To increase adoption of technology, the system must be:
  - Cost effective
  - User friendly
  - Free from administrative burdens
Strategic Considerations

- Current environment:
  - Schedule II require written prescription; emergency exception
  - Schedule III and IV written or oral
  - Initialed by dispensing pharmacist
  - Stored and readily retrievable
Strategic Considerations (cont.)

- Modify Regulations to Clarify:
  - Definition of “written prescription”
  - Definitions of “signed” and “signature”
  - E-prescriptions are not subject to the “seven day” rule
  - Pharmacists may initial and annotate prescriptions electronically
  - Electronic storage is acceptable
Strategic Considerations (cont.)

- **Fraud and Diversion Prevention:**
  - Pharmacists evaluate prescription
  - Know the prescriber
  - Know or can access the prescriber’s DEA number
  - Know the patient
  - Contact prescriber for questionable prescriptions
Implementation Recommendations

- Use existing technology
- Existing e-prescribing vendors/systems are secure and HIPAA-compliant
Implementation Recommendations (cont.)

- Need one seamless, integrated system for both controlled and non-controlled drugs
- Use HHS/CMS standards for electronic prescriptions
- Use NCPDP SCRIPT Standard 5.0
Implementation Recommendations (cont.)

- Incorporate the National Provider Identifier (NPI)
  - Allow for two-way communication between pharmacists and prescribers

- Work with the health care community to implement e-prescribing quickly
Conclusion

- E-prescribing can facilitate quality and efficient patient care
- System must not create administrative burdens or new opportunities for fraud
- Diversion and abuse concerns can be handled by existing technology through one seamless, integrated system
Thank You

Questions?