DEA Trends & Update

Connecticut /Rhode Island Pharmacy Diversion Awareness Conference

Date: September 24-25, 2017
Goals and Objectives

- DEA’s Mission
- Public Health Epidemic
- Looking at the Past
- Drugs of Abuse
- Impact on the youth
- From Pharmaceuticals to Heroin
- Indiscriminate Prescribing
- Criminal Activity
- Legal Obligations of DEA Registrants
- DEA’s Response
- Drug Disposal
DEA’s Mission
The mission of the Diversion Control Division is to prevent, detect, and investigate the diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances and listed chemicals from legitimate channels of distribution while ...

ensuring an adequate and uninterrupted supply of controlled substances to meet legitimate medical, commercial, and scientific needs.
Closed System of Distribution

Foreign Mfr

Importer

Manufacturer

Distributor

Practitioner

Pharmacy Hospital Clinic

1,707,111 (7/31/2017)

• Practitioners: 1,267,267
• Mid Level Practitioner: 333,579
• Retail Pharmacies: 71,851
• Hospital/Clinics: 17,756

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Diversion Control Division
Closed System of Distribution

Cyclic Investigations

Established Schedules

Record Keeping Requirements

Registration

Security Requirements

Established Quotas

ARCOS

Drug Enforcement Administration
Office of Diversion Control
The DEA is responsible for:

- the **oversight** of the system
- the **integrity** of the system
- the **protection** of the public health and safety

*DEA doesn’t regulate the practice of medicine.*
Public Health Epidemic
Present Epidemic Drug Crisis

- U.S. faces epidemic: addiction to opioids
  A. Prescription pain relievers
  B. Heroin

Problem stems from:
  a. pain from injuries, accidents, surgeries, etc…
  b. the increased availability of these drugs
  c. Teenagers who are bored and curious

- According to SAMHSA, in 2015, 2.6 million people were addicted to these opioids
- Nationwide, there has been over 50,000 overdose deaths
- According to the US Surgeon General, around 250 million prescriptions are written every year, enough for each American to have one bottle
- U.S. has 5% of the world’s population and we acquire over 80% of prescription drugs – pills are taken regularly
Public Health Epidemic

2000-2015

Over 550,000 unintentional drug overdose deaths in the US

2015

52,404 drug-related overdose deaths

143 deaths every 24 hours (129 in ‘14)
1 death every 10.07 minutes (11.16 minutes ‘14)

33,091 deaths involved opioids, including heroin (91)
*17,536 deaths involved opioid pain relievers (48)

*Opioid pain relievers (other than synthetic opioids) ICD-10 codes (T40.2, T40.3, & T40.6) excluding the category predominated by illicit fentanyl

CDC National Center for Health Statistics/Morbidity and Morality Weekly Report (MMWR); December 30, 2016
On an average Day in the U.S.:

- More than **650,000** opioid prescriptions dispensed
- **3,900 people** initiate nonmedical use of prescription opioids
- **580 people** initiate heroin use

1. **Source**: IMS Health National Prescription Audit
2. **SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health**
3. **Center for Disease Control (CDC) National Vital Statistics System**
Opioid involvement in benzodiazepine overdose

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder
DRUG-FREE AMERICA

AGE 0-4  
AMOXICILLIN

4-12  
RITALIN

12-18  
APPETITE SUPPRESSANTS

18-24  
NO-DOZ

24-38  
PROZAC

38-65  
ZANTAC

65—  
EVERYTHING ELSE
How did we get here?
Before the 1990’s

Doctors – mindful of patients’ addiction potential

They prescribed opioids for:
- Acute pain patients
- Hospice patients
- Bone fractures
- After surgeries

Doctors did not prescribe opioids for chronic pain such as back pains, headaches, etc…

No long term opioid treatment

Doctors considered the prescribing of opioids to be unsafe and dangerous
Before the 1990’s

During chronic pain:

a. Non controlled drugs were prescribed
b. Muscle relaxants
c. Therapeutic remedies
d. Acupuncture
e. Use opioids as the last resort

NO “EASY FIX” CONCEPT
Rx Drug Ads on TV – Educational or Influential?

Overweight? Suffering from anxiety or erectile dysfunction? Well, relief is just a prescription pill away according to the endless television ads promoting prescription drugs.
Drugs of Abuse

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division
Most commonly prescribed prescription medicine?

Hydrocodone

- Hydrocodone / Acetaminophen (toxicity)

- Similarities:
  - Structurally related to codeine
  - Equal to morphine in producing opiate-like effects

- Brand Names: Vicodin®, Lortab®, Lorcet®

- October 6, 2014 moved to SCHEDULE II

- “Cocktail” or “Trinity”
  - Hydrocodone (opioid)
  - Soma® / carisoprodol (Schedule 4 muscle relaxant)
  - Alprazolam / Xanax® (Benzodiazepine)

Street prices: $2 to $10 per tablet depending on strength & region
The Trinity Cocktail

Hydrocodone

Carisoprodol
Aka: Soma
Muscle Relaxant
C-IV as of 1/11/2012

Alprazolam
Benzodiazepine

Opiate
The 1990s

OxyContin® Tablets
(oxycodeine hydrochloride controlled-release)
Oxycontin

• OxyContin controlled release formulation of Schedule II oxycodone
  – The controlled release method of delivery allowed for a longer duration of drug action so it contained much larger doses of oxycodone
  – Abusers easily compromised the controlled release formulation by crushing the tablets for a powerful morphine-like high
  – 10, 20, 40, 80mg available

• Effects:
  – Similar to morphine in effects and potential for abuse/dependence
  – Sold in “Cocktails” such as: **Oxycodone, Soma ® and Xanax®**

• Street price: Approx. $80 per 80mg tablet
Oxycodone HCL CR (OxyContin®) Reformulation

NOTE: New formulation introduced in 2010 made it more difficult to circumvent for insufflation (snorting) or injection. Does nothing to prevent oral abuse.

Caused large drops in sales when the reformulation went into effect.
Hydromorphone

- Opioid
- Used for moderate to severe pain
- 8 times stronger than morphine
- Recreationally used as heroin
- Best consumed intravenously

*In 2008, there were over 14,000 hydromorphone overdose deaths in the US.*
Fentanyl

Legitimate

Clandestine

VS.
INCONSISTENT BLENDING
CLANDESTINE FENTANYL - OVERDOSE

- Bulk clandestinely manufactured Fentanyl of unknown concentration is imported into the US
- Fentanyl is then “cut” blended then repackaged is powder/pills
- Inconsistent blending combined with unknown purity results in powders and pills of various concentration. Which may lead to overdoses.
Impact on our youth

Skittles Party

Generation RX
Most Frequent Method of Obtaining a Pharmaceutical Controlled Substance for Non Medical Use

Friends and Family... For Free!!
Where else do our kids get their information from?
www.erowid.org
Where do kids get their information from? www.bluelight.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>User</th>
<th>Message</th>
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| 08-27-2010   | 01:11 AM | mz.mary420 | well just got ours and they suck! when snorted the pill balls up in your nose and gets stuck, so i tried sucking on one and it did ok, but tastes nasty. No way you can shoot them as mentioned in a previous post. havent tried smoking it yet, kinda in a hole money wise, it cost me over $700.00 to get my 80s filled and i probably wont even get half my money back 😞  
* if anyone has tried to smoke this new formulated shit, please post! thanks |
| 08-27-2010   | 06:09 AM | mephist00 | ya my friend has tried to smoke the new ones... said its very harsh on the lungs and throat... so far the only way ive been able to beat the time release, is use a hose clamp to grind it very fine, and snort it... it doesn't gel up like you would think (doesn't gel up like the football shaped generic 40's do anyways) it just kinda turns snotty... but if you can get it down fast it seems to work ok |
|              |          |          | **Originally Posted by stalk**  
I've come to the conclusion it's because these psychedelic visions are simply vibrating on a higher, or different, spectrum of frequencies that normally the monkey does not perceive. |
Pills v. Heroin
Community Impact?

Heroin trafficking organizations relocating to areas where prescription drug abuse is on the rise

Heroin traffickers pave the way for increasing crime and violence

Law enforcement and prosecutors eventually fighting the problem on two fronts (prescription opiate diversion and heroin distribution) further depleting resources

Communities suffer
Heroin Seizure

Pharmaceutical Oxycodone 30mg
COPS: PHOTOS OF BOY WITH PASSED-OUT ADULTS SHOW DRUG SCOURGE

Police in East Liverpool, Ohio released these images they say to illustrate the impact of the heroin and painkiller epidemic. (City of East Liverpool, Ohio/Facebook)
CDC (2016):

Heroin deaths **more than triple** between 2010-2014

“This increase . . . has been shown to be closely tied to opioid pain reliever misuse and dependence.”
Violence
Violence Related to Controlled Substance Pharmaceuticals
Judge’s Sentence

**Wife** (driver of get away car): 25 years in prison

**Husband** (shooter):

- Five (5) consecutive life terms in person
- Solitary Confinement

“I promised you when you plead guilty that you hoped for mercy. I will not disappoint you. You merit the scorn of this community, your victims’ families and this court. Each one of your victims was unique. They had one thing in common: they were all very good people. They were the kind of people who tended to help others. Ironically, if you would have asked for their help, they would have come to your aid. They were the kind of people our community rightly treasures. I want the record to show in light of your murderous character, you are to be placed in the most restrictive conditions possible, solitary confinement and be denied all privileges for the rest of your life.”
Prescription Drug Abuse is driven by Indiscriminate Prescribing Criminal Activity
This is the basic principle to practice medicine. Doctors take an oath to do no harm and provide the best care for their patients. Doctors are realizing the potential for addiction when they first prescribe opioids for chronic pain, even if it is in small quantities. Indiscriminate prescribing can endanger patients’ lives. Patients have gotten addicted and have overdosed. Doctors are realizing that freely prescribing opioids is dangerous, causing them to use other remedies and implement opioids as the last option.
Many Patients Share Medication prescribed

Two new U.S. studies shed light on opioid epidemic

1. University of Pennsylvania Dental School Study:
   *More than half of the narcotics prescribed for wisdom teeth removal go unused...findings suggest that more than 100 million pills prescribed go unused...leaving the door open for possible misuse or abuse.*


2. John Hopkins Study:
   +60% had leftover opioids they hung on for “future use”
     - 20% shared their medications
     - 8% likely will share w/ friend
     - 14% likely will share w/ relative
     - 10% securely lock their medication

Clinical Reminders:

- Opioids are not first-line or routine therapy for chronic pain
- Establish and measure goals for pain and function
- Discuss benefits and risks and availability of non-opioid therapies with patient

CDC Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain

- Use immediate-release opioids when starting

- *Start low and go slow*

- When opioids are needed for acute pain, prescribe no more than needed

- Do not prescribe ER/LA opioids for acute pain

- *Follow-up and re-evaluate risk of harm;* reduce dose or taper and discontinue if needed

CDC Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain

- Evaluate risk factors for opioid-related harms
- **Check PDMP** for higher dosages and prescriptions from other providers
- **Use urine drug testing to identify prescribed substances and undisclosed use**
- Avoid concurrent benzodiazepine and opioid prescribing
- Arrange treatment for opioid use disorder if needed

Survey of Long-Term Painkiller Users

• Majority say their doctor talked about possibility of addiction or dependence – **61% say there was no discussion about plan to get them off.**

• Majority say they used the drugs to relieve pain. Other major reasons for taking them:
  – 20% - ‘for fun or get high”
  – 14% - “to deal with day-to-day stress”
  – 10% - “to relax or relieve tension”

• Other Findings:
  – 34% admit being dependent or addicted
  – 17% have taken painkillers that were not specifically prescribed for them
  – 14% have given their painkillers to a family member or friend
  – 20% know or suspect someone was using, taking or selling their painkillers

Criminal Activity
United States V. Alvin Yee, M.D.

MEDICAL OFFICE
Various Locations, Orange County, California

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division
Dr. Yee primarily met with his “patients” in Starbucks cafes throughout Orange County, California.

He would see up to a dozen patients each night between 7:00 and 11:00 p.m. and wrote these “patients” prescriptions, primarily for opiates, in exchange for cash.

Yee pled guilty to distributing millions of dollars in **oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, Adderall® and alprazolam** outside the course of professional practice and without a legitimate medical purpose.
During a one-year time period, Yee wrote prescriptions for a total of **876,222 dosage units** of all medications combined.

52% of all prescriptions (458,056 dosage units) written by Yee were for oxycodone (92%-30mg) during the one-year period.

96% - oxycodone, hydrocodone, alprazolam, hydromorphone, and oxymorphone.

Almost half of **Yee’s patients were 25 and under**.
Legal Obligations of DEA Registrants

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division
Effective Controls

All applicants and registrants shall provide effective controls and procedures to guard against theft and diversion of controlled substances.

In order to determine whether a registrant has provided effective controls against diversion, the Administrator shall use the security requirements set forth in §§ 1301.72-1301.76 as standards for the physical security controls and operating procedures necessary to prevent diversion.

21 CFR § 1301.71(a)
Suspicious Orders

Non-practitioners of controlled substances

“The registrant shall design and operate a system to disclose to the registrant suspicious orders of controlled substances... Suspicious orders include orders of unusual size, orders deviating substantially from a normal pattern, and orders of unusual frequency.”

21 CFR § 1301.74(b)
Prescriptions

A prescription for a controlled substance to be effective must be issued for a legitimate medical purpose by an individual practitioner acting in the usual course of professional practice.

21 CFR § 1306.04(a)

*United States v Moore* 423 US 122 (1975)
A pharmacist, by law, has a corresponding responsibility to ensure that prescriptions are legitimate.

When a prescription is presented by a patient or demanded to be filled for a patient by a doctor’s office, a pharmacist is not obligated to fill the prescription!!!
The responsibility for the proper prescribing and dispensing of controlled substances is upon the prescribing practitioner, but a corresponding responsibility rests with the pharmacist who fills the prescription.

21 CFR § 1306.04(a)
The Last Line of Defense

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division
Who do I call to report a practitioner?

- Local Police, County, State
- State Board of Pharmacy, Medicine, Nursing, Dental
- DEA local office and Tactical Diversion Squad
- Health Department
- HHS OIG if Medicare, Medicaid fraud
DEA’s Response

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division
DEA has increased the number of registrants to be inspected to ensure compliance with the Controlled Substances Act and its implementing regulations.

DEA has also increased in the frequency of regulatory investigations.

Verifications of customers and suppliers.
Community Partnerships

- DEA recognizes we cannot arrest our way out of the drug problem – our goal is lasting success in the communities we serve.

- **Education** and **Prevention** are key elements for a true 360 Strategy.

- Law enforcement operations provide an opportunity for community empowerment and a jumping off point for education and prevention efforts.
Distributor Initiative

Educate and inform distributors/manufacturers of their due diligence responsibilities under the CSA by discussing their Suspicious Order Monitoring System, reviewing their ARCOS data for sales and purchases of Schedules II and III controlled substances, and discussing national trends involving the abuse of prescription controlled substances.

Briefings to 99 firms with 309 registrations
Pharmacy Diversion Awareness Conferences

These conferences are designed to educate pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy loss prevention personnel on ways to address and respond to potential diversion activity.
The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) promotes excellence in medical practice, licensure, and regulation on behalf of 70 state medical and osteopathic Boards across the country in their protection of the public.

DEA and FSMB are currently working on developing strategies to work more effectively and jointly on indiscriminate prescriber investigations in order to facilitate the administrative process to take action against those that are a threat to the public health and welfare quickly, and at the same time not jeopardize a criminal investigation.
National Take Back Initiative (NTBI)

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division

Got Drugs?

Turn in your unused or expired medication for safe disposal Saturday.

Click here for a collection site near you.

 disposed

unused

#14

OCTOBER 28, 2017
National Take Back I-XIII Totals:

Total Weight Collected (pounds): 8,103,363  (4,052 Tons)

Drug Enforcement Administration Diversion Control Division Overseas: 25
Disposal of Controlled Substances
**Ultimate User**

*Ultimate user* means as “a person who has lawfully obtained, and who possesses, a controlled substance for his own use or for the use of a member of his household or for an animal owned by him or a member of his household.”

21 USC § 802(27)

*Ultimate user* methods of destruction prior to Disposal rule:

- Disposal in Trash (**ONDCP method**); or
- Flushing (**FDA opioids and select CSs**)
- National Take-back Event (DEA)
- Transfer to Law Enforcement
- (Police Station Receptacles or local Take-back events)
For disposals of Retail Pharmacy CS inventory:

- Incineration and Chemical Ingestion – DEA’s acceptable methods of destruction that renders all controlled substances non retrievable
- Retail Pharmacies – Use reverse distributors
- Use 222s for transfer of Schedule 2 CS
- Reverse Distributors will complete the DEA-41: copy may be requested
- Present this to Investigators during onsite inspections
Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010

- CSA amended to provide ultimate users and LTCF with additional methods to dispose of unused, unwanted or expired controlled substance medication in a secure, safe and responsible manner
  21 USC § 822(f) & (g)

- Participation is voluntary
  21 USC § 822(g)(2)

- Registrants authorized to collect:
  - Manufacturers
  - Distributors
  - Reverse Distributors
  - Narcotic Treatment Programs
  - Hospitals/clinics with an on-site pharmacy
  - Retail Pharmacies
  21 CFR § 1317.40

Authorized collectors, as registrants, are readily familiar with the security procedures and other requirements to handle controlled substances.
How a registrant becomes a collector?

- Must be registered to handle Schedule 2 CS
- Must request a modification from DEA (can be in writing or online)
- Request contains:
  1. Registrant’s name, address and DEA #
  2. Method of collection: (receptacle or mail back)
  3. Authorized signature

*No fee for modification
21 CFR 1301.51(b) and (c)
Collection Receptacle

**Collection** means to receive a controlled substance for the purpose of destruction.

Places where they can be located:
1. Inside a collector’s registered location
2. Inside law enforcement location
3. Inside an authorized LTCF


Ultimate users shall put the substances directly into the collection receptacle.

Controlled and non-controlled substances may be comingled.

Collected substances shall not be counted, sorted, inventoried, or otherwise individually handled.

Registrants (Retail Pharmacies) *shall not dispose of stock or inventory in collection receptacles.

21 CFR § 1317.75(b) and (c)
Collection Receptacle Location

- Registered location – immediate proximity of designated area where controlled substances are stored and at which an employee is present.
  - LTCF – located in secure area regularly monitored by LTCF employees.
  - Hospital/clinic – located in an area regularly monitored by employees—not in proximity of where emergency or urgent care is provided.
  - NTP – located in a room that does not contain any other controlled substances and is securely locked with controlled access.

21 CFR § 1317.75(d)
Mail-Back Program

Requirements of mail-back program

- Only lawfully possessed schedules II-V controlled substances may be collected
- Controlled and non-controlled substances may be collected together
- Registrant must have method of on-site destruction

21 CFR § 1317.70 (b)

DEA Registrant who sells mail-back packages for another registrant is NOT required to modify registration as a collector
Pharmaceutical Wastage

Not subject to 21 CFR Part 1317
- Destruction does not have to be “non-retrievable”
- DEA Form 41 must not be utilized

Dispensing must be recorded as a record
21 CFR § 1304.22(c)

Clarification memorandum on DEA website at www.DEAdiversion.usdoj.gov
Questions?

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U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Diversion Control Division