



Funding the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)

In 2009, Florida passed legislation to establish a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) through a coordinated effort involving law enforcement, healthcare and anti-drug organizations as well as the support of the parents and friends who have lost loved ones to overdoses and drug addictions. The PDMP is a database system that collects controlled substance prescription information from health care practitioners and pharmacists after dispensed to a patient. Since the launch of Florida's PDMP, law enforcement and health regulators working together through regional strike forces, Florida has experienced a:

- 52 percent decline in the number of oxycodone deaths (781 fewer deaths);
- 23 percent decline in hydrocodone deaths (71 fewer deaths); and
- 23 percent decline in prescription drug deaths (620 fewer deaths).

While the PDMP is a valuable tool in preventing prescription drug crime in Florida, it is not adequately funded. At the PDMP's inception, funding prohibitions were created to restrict the program to using only federal or private grant money, and funds raised by the PDMP Foundation Board of Directions. Although eager to assist, prescription drug manufacturers are prevented from making any donations to fund the PDMP's operation. Last year the Florida Sheriffs supported a bill that would have removed the funding prohibitions, but ultimately the bill failed to pass. As a compromise, a one-time exception was made to use \$500,000 in general revenue to fully fund another year of the PDMP's operation.

The PDMP has also greatly decreased the prevalence of unscrupulous pain management clinics, also known as pill mills, law enforcement has used it to successfully identifying and reducing potential "doctor shoppers." In Pasco County, a PDMP inquiry revealed that in a two year time period a patient visited 18 doctors who had prescribed her oxycodone and morphine—to name a few. The patient utilized 19 pharmacies throughout Pasco, Hernando, and Pinellas counties. As a result of the patient withholding information from practitioners, she was charged with multiple counts of doctor shopping which resulted in her being prescribed almost 13,000 pills. During the first quarter of the PDMP's operation in 2011, 2,864 individuals had one or more prescription drugs prescribed to them by more than five prescribers and dispensed at more than five pharmacies in a 90-day period. By the end of the 2013, that number has been reduced by 51% to 1,415.

The PDMP is an important resource for healthcare practitioners, pharmacists, and law enforcement to reduce the spread of improperly prescribed highly addictive narcotic pain medication. However, without proper funding, Florida could backslide to the epidemic of pill mills and prescription drug overdoses it knew before the implementation of the PDMP.

Support legislation allowing funding of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

