**MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

In Australia the use of prescription drugs is an increasing problem. Pharmaceutical drugs have been the highest recurrent contributor to overdose deaths within Australia. Australians who are affected by the dependence of prescription drugs find themselves going from doctor to doctor and pharmacy to pharmacy every day to assist in feeding their addiction. In saying that, we have developed a project idea to mitigate this. The project is to develop a software to track the usage of these drugs for every patient they are prescribed. This software would need to be used by all pharmacists in the country which would provide them the ability to search using the customer’s details and find out where else they have been to collect this drug as well as when they last filled a prescription. This system would also need to update the patient records of how often the drugs are being acquired and used.

Not only is this a snowballing issue in Australia, but a worldwide issue which is a growing concern to all governments. So many people have had their lives torn apart from being addicts and the rate is increasing in many places not just Australia. A survey which was completed in 2013 found that 4.8% of Australian Adults were using prescription drugs for non-medical purposes. The amount of people in syringe and needle programs who have testified that the most recent drug they used to inject themselves with was a prescription opioid amplified from 7% in 2000 to 23% in 2015. The project is important because if done correctly it can really have an impact on the lives of the people who are going through very tough periods.

By implementing this service to pharmacies, they would all need to have a protected internet connection which would be linked to a server which is based in the cloud. This server would be available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This system would work by all pharmacists (or pharmacist assistants) inputting the details of all their clients and the drug that was prescribed to them. Yes, this may take a bit of extra time for the pharmacist or pharmacist assistant, however it would assist in decreasing the abuse of prescription drugs. As this would be a live system that would be hosted by a government agency, all the data that is entered into the system would be live as soon as it is entered, thus there would be no down-time. If an abuser is going from doctor to doctor and pharmacy to pharmacy this would be an excellent program to guarantee that abusers aren’t able to feed their addictions by abusing the medical professions, as they would be red flagged in the system.

If this program is implemented, it will help a lot of people who are in desperate situations to get back to better health and to return from being dependent on drugs. As mentioned before the computer program would track customer’s prescription orders to limit their use of prescription drugs. As soon as a person is flagged in the system, a response to the situation would be to send a qualified person from a rehabilitation centre with authority from the government. Helping the citizens get back to health is a major part in keeping a community strong and most of all safe. Rehabilitation centres would have personnel ready for tracking and escorting the addict in need back to the centre where they would get the proper care and help. Those who are flagged by the program would be listed in “red” meaning; in need of help. After the addict has received the care and the rehabilitation that they need, they would be released back into society as “green” meaning they have been rehabilitated and are now trying to return to a normal life style. The live system would then keep track of their state to make sure they do not relapse. This information will also help doctors determine who the patients are and what to do with their condition.

This type of service would necessitate each pharmacy to have a securely connected computer, which the government would make compulsory to operate. Unfortunately, this means that pharmacies would have to invest a bit of money and time into obtaining these specialised computers or they would be unable to remain operating. As this service is a program that would hold sensitive information about customers, it is highly important that the software development for this program is exceedingly secure. There are many skills and talents that would be essential to make this project an effective one. Everything from project managers, software developers and computer installers that have experience installing computers that have a secure internet connection.