What is the Prescription Monitoring Program?

The Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), sometimes called Prescription Review by the Washington Department of Health, is a statewide online database which tracks information regarding prescriptions of Schedule II, III, IV and V controlled substances.[[1]](#footnote-1)

What is the purpose of the PMP?

Authorized individuals can access the PMP to review this information as a means to prevent prescription drug abuse, and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public.[[2]](#footnote-2) Physicians and other prescribers are able to review the prescription history of their patients and look for potential interactions, duplicate prescribing, possible misuse, or other potential concerns.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Who must report information to the PMP?

Pharmacies and practitioners that dispense any Schedule II, III, IV or V controlled substances to patients in Washington state, as defined by WAC \_\_, must report information to the PMP. This includes dispensing samples of medications.[[4]](#footnote-4)

When can a physician access the PMP?

The PMP can be accessed online at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.[[5]](#footnote-5)

What information is collected by the PMP?

In addition to collecting information about the prescriptions themselves, such as drug name, dosage, and the prescribing and dispensing dates, the PMP also collects and stores information about the dispensing pharmacies and prescribers, and patient names, addresses, and dates of birth.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The bill also clarifies that controlled substances dispensed for one-day use do not have to be reported.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The program does not collect hospital inpatient dispensing data or data from the administration of a controlled substance.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Who can access the information collected by the PMP?

* People authorized to prescribe or dispense controlled substances to provide medical or pharmaceutical care for their patients, including physicians, pharmacists, dentists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and other licensed health professionals authorized by the Washington State Department of Health;
* An individual who requests their own prescription monitoring information;
* Health professional licensing, certification or regulatory agency or entity;
* Local, state and federal law enforcement or prosecutorial officials engaged in an investigation involving a designated person;
* Medical examiners and coroners for cause of death determination;
* Authorized practitioners of the Department of Social and Health Services or Health Care Authority regarding Medicaid program recipients;
* The director or director's designee within the Department of Labor and Industries for workers' compensation claimants;
* The director or the director's designee within the Department of Corrections for offenders committed to the Department of Corrections;
* Other entities under grand jury subpoena or court order; and
* Department personnel for purposes of administration and enforcement of this rule or [RCW 69.50](http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=69.50).

In addition to this list of authorized individuals, public or private entities may obtain data for statistical, research or educational purposes. These entities will receive data without information that could be used to identify individual patients, dispensers, prescribers, or people who received prescriptions from dispensers. [[9]](#footnote-9)

Can a physician authorize someone else to check the PMP in his/her stead?

Yes. A physician can delegate this authority to a licensed health professional to a health care professional whom the physician supervises. An example might be a registered nurse or medical assistant who works for the physician.[[10]](#footnote-10) The physician is still responsible for ensuring that the information accessed by the delegatee remains confidential.

If a physician discovers information through the PMP that leads him/her to believe a crime has been committed, is the physician required to inform the police?

No, a physician does not have an obligation to inform the police. He or she is permitted to disclose this suspicion to the police, however, if he or she has a reasonable belief that a drug-related crime has been committed.

I have never accessed the PMP before – how do I start?

You will need set up a Secure Access Washington (SAW) account. Go to the SAW website, at secureaccess.wa.gov to start. The Department has even provided training videos to help providers, which can be accessed and viewed online. Go to <http://1.usa.gov/1EyCC01> to access these training videos and explanatory materials.

Who should a physician contact with technical questions?

The Prescription Review Help Desk, managed by Health Information Designs Inc., can be contacted at w[apmp-info@hidinc.com](mailto:apmp-info@hidinc.com) or by calling 877-719-3121.

Where can I find more information on the PMP?

The Department has more information regarding the PMP on its website, at <http://1.usa.gov/1EyCC01>. If you have specific questions, you can contact the program by calling 360-236-4806 or emailing your questions to [prescriptionmonitoring@doh.wa.gov](mailto:prescriptionmonitoring@doh.wa.gov).

1. The pharmacy quality assurance commission is able to add additional drugs to the list of substances the program monitors, pursuant to RCW 70.225.020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. WAC 246-470-001. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. DOH website, http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/PrescriptionMonitoringProgramPMP/ProviderFAQ. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. DOH website, http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/PrescriptionMonitoringProgramPMP/ProviderFAQ. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. DOH website, http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/PrescriptionMonitoringProgramPMP/ProviderFAQ. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. DOH website, http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/PrescriptionMonitoringProgramPMP/ProviderFAQ. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The bill also clarifies that controlled substances dispensed for one-day use do not have to be reported. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. WA-PMP-FAQs-for-DOH-Staff-1.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. DOH website, http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/PrescriptionMonitoringProgramPMP/ProviderFAQ. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. WAC 246-470-050. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)