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ICYMI: “Christie Hails 5 More States Joining Effort To Track Drug Prescriptions”

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Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)

Christie hails 5 more states joining effort to track drug prescriptions

Tom Haydon

Star-Ledger

Five more states have joined a drug prescription monitoring program enabling doctors and law enforcement agencies to track drug use in the battle opioid abuse, Gov. Chris Christie announced Wednesday.

"I'm pleased to announce that five more states are joining this proven, lifesaving network and are now actively data sharing information with us," Christie said in a statement delivered at St. Barnabas Medical Center.

The states being added to the network are Pennsylvania, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and West Virginia.

They join seven other states already in the program, including New York, Connecticut, Delaware, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia and Minnesota.

Three years ago, when the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program was started, the state began sharing with Connecticut and Delaware.

"This database is used to identify and successfully prosecute healthcare professionals associated with pill mills that dispense narcotics without a legitimate medical purpose," Christie said.

Over 35,000 pharmacists, physicians and others who prescribe controlled dangerous substances are registered in the network, the Governor said.

...

"First and foremost for patient protection," the Governor said. The effort, he said also will allow law enforcement to identify providers who are profiting from people who are addicted to the drugs.

Last February Christie signed a law limiting initial prescriptions for pain-killing opioids to five days. The law permits doctors to extend a prescription for an additional five days when needed.

Full Article [HERE](#).

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More States Join NJ Drug-Monitoring System To Curb Abuses Like Doctor-Shopping

Governor says interstate use of the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program has skyrocketed in last couple of years

Lilo H. Stainton

NJ Spotlight

Doctor-shopping for opiates and other addictive drugs has become more challenging in New Jersey and the surrounding region, thanks to agreements that link the Garden State's database to records in five other states, including Pennsylvania.

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Gov. Chris Christie announced Wednesday that Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and West Virginia were recently connected to the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program, a centralized database launched in 2011 to help reduce prescription abuse.

Connecticut, Delaware, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Minnesota were already enrolled in the program, and New York was added last year. Christie said interstate use of the system skyrocketed more than 500 percent between 2015 and 2016 and interest spiked further during the first quarter of 2017.

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Christie also said the PMP has been expanded to allow physicians to review two years' worth of prescription records, instead of just one. In addition, the system now automatically converts all medicines to a standard "morphine milligram equivalent" dose, to help avoid over-prescribing or patient overdose. (Research has shown that many heroin users first became addicted to opiates or other prescription drugs.)

...

"The NJPMP is perhaps the most immediate and direct way my administration is bringing America together to fight the deadliest health crisis of our time," Christie said. "We will keep growing the NJPMP, as bipartisan leaders of more states recognize it is an invaluable solution to protect people from the disease of addiction and to connect tens of millions of people with immediate treatment, including those who otherwise would have been lost under the radar."

...

Pharmacists also are required to check the system before dispensing drugs to anyone they suspect may be misusing or abusing a prescription. Pharmacy data is downloaded into the system once a day. In order to utilize the system all users must register with the state and must pledge to access the information only to benefit patients. Members of law enforcement can also be granted access in certain cases.

Such databases — the use of which is mandated for prescribers in nearly two dozen states — are designed to help physicians and pharmacists identify patients showing potential signs of abuse, like regular requests for higher doses, and curb doctor-shopping, in which an individual visits multiple providers to collect pills to sell. While some physicians raised concerns about the time and additional red tape involved with using the system, the profession appears to have largely embraced the program.

According to American Medical Association data, there were more than 136 million registered database inquiries nationwide in 2016 — some 50 million more physician searches than were done the previous year and more than twice the number conducted in 2014. In New Jersey, searches grew steadily from 1.4 million in 2014 to nearly 2.5 million last year.

Perhaps most importantly, the use of these databases appears to be having an effect, the AMA findings suggest. Between 2013 and 2016 opioid prescriptions dropped 14.6 percent nationwide; there were still more than 215 million scripts written last year. New Jersey's use of these medicines declined 11 percent over the same time period, with nearly 4.6 million prescriptions dispensed in 2016.

"With every new partner we add to the NJPMP, we're building a broader, stronger network more capable of combatting prescription drug abuse and diversion," said Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino, who oversees the Division of Consumer Affairs, which operates the database. "Prescribers and pharmacists in our new partner states have joined thousands of professionals nationwide who are reaching beyond geographical boundaries to present an allied front against the scourge of addiction."

Full Article [HERE](#).

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Pa., other states join N.J.'s prescription monitoring program

Nicole Leonard

Press of Atlantic City

Pennsylvania and four other states have joined eight already in the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program against opioid abuse and addiction.

Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and West Virginia enrolled in the centralized data-sharing system for health care providers and pharmacists to track narcotic painkiller, opioid and other prescription sales, Gov. Chris Christie announced Wednesday.

...

"We will keep growing the NJPMP as bipartisan leaders of more states recognize it is an invaluable solution to protect people from the disease of addiction and to connect tens of millions of people with immediate treatment, including those who otherwise would have been lost under the radar," Christie wrote in a statement.

New York, Connecticut, Delaware, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia and Minnesota already are in the national program that Christie launched in New Jersey in 2011.

The monitoring program aims to prevent and treat drug addiction, misuse and multistate "doctor shopping," which is when someone visits multiple physicians to get multiple prescriptions.

"With every new partner we add to the NJPMP, we're building a broader, stronger network more capable of combating prescription drug abuse and diversion," Attorney General Christopher Porrino wrote in a statement.

In 2016, the hub facilitated more than 1 million prescriber data requests between New Jersey and its program partners. Those requests numbered more than 800,000 in the first five months of this year.

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"These enhancements to the data-sharing system, coupled with the addition of five new partner states, strengthens the NJPMP's role as a vital tool in fighting addiction," said Steve Lee, director of the state Division of Consumer Affairs, in a statement.

Full Article [HERE](#).

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