

MSMA Statement to Members Regarding Governor’s PDMP Announcement

On July 17, 2017, Governor Greitens issued Executive Order 17-18 in response to the opioid epidemic. The order directs the Department of Health and Senior Services to implement a three-phased program to monitor physician prescribing practices for controlled substances.

During the first phase, the state will contract with Express Scripts and other private companies. These companies will allow the department access to their prescribing data, which will then be scrutinized by the state in an effort to identify “inappropriately prescribed, dispensed, or obtained” controlled substances.

The second phase of the order requires the department to establish a rule that would force dispensers to submit prescription and dispensation information directly to the Department of Health in order to identify “inappropriately prescribed, dispensed, or obtained” controlled substances.

The final phase directs the Department of Health to work with vendors to develop software that will allow the department to monitor prescriptions more efficiently.

Although many press reports have concluded that this order establishes a prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP), it actually only allows the state to more closely observe prescribing practices. Inappropriate opioid prescribers identified by this new system will be turned over to law enforcement and licensing boards.

The Governor’s program does not allow physicians (or other healthcare professionals) to access the patient’s prescribing and dispensing history - a necessary component of all PDMPs. This information assists prescribers in identifying and preventing addiction at the point-of-care. Every other state’s PDMP allows prescribers access to this information.

MSMA will continue to advocate for a statewide PDMP that offers physicians the clinical tools they need to fight the opioid epidemic.

In the meantime, MSMA encourages members to engage their local policymakers and advocate for county and municipal participation in the St. Louis County PDMP. This groundbreaking effort by St. Louis County went into effect earlier this year and will soon cover nearly two-thirds of the state’s population (see map courtesy of St. Louis County Public Health Department). County ordinances can be found on the St. Louis PDMP website (http://www.stlouisco.com/Portals/8/docs/document%20library/PDMP/PDMP_subscribing_county_table.pdf), which can be used for guidance by similarly situated counties and cities.

