

# Pennsylvania Prescription Drug Monitoring Program System

Office of Drug  
Surveillance and  
Misuse Prevention

The Pennsylvania Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) System operates within the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Office of Drug Surveillance and Misuse Prevention (ODSMP). The ODSMP aims to improve the health of Pennsylvanians by promoting the appropriate use of controlled substances and ensuring that they are prescribed and dispensed safely and responsibly in the Commonwealth.

## What is a PDMP System and what information is collected?

A PDMP System is an electronic database that collects information on all filled controlled substance prescriptions. Prescription opioids such as hydrocodone (Vicodin), oxycodone (OxyContin), benzodiazepines such as diazepam (Valium), and alprazolam (Xanax) are controlled substances. Controlled substances have the potential for misuse and dependence, which may increase risk for substance use disorder. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency assigns a schedule to every controlled substance, ranging from one to five. State legislation may assign drug scheduling as well. The lower the schedule number, the greater the possible risks.

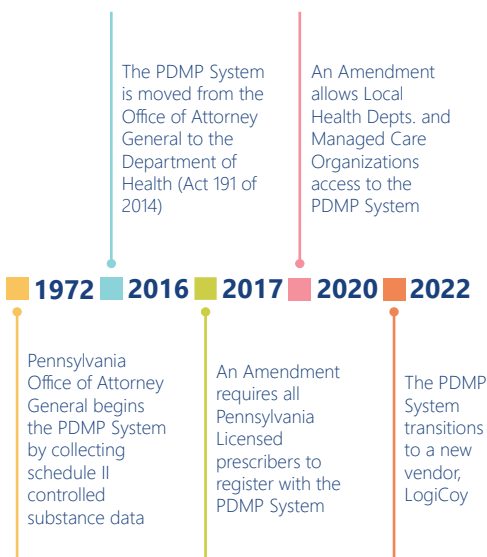
## What is the goal of the Pennsylvania PDMP System?

The PDMP System helps prevent prescription drug misuse and empowers health care providers to make informed decisions about prescribing and treatment for their patients. The PDMP System is also a vital public health tool, providing critical data for surveillance, planning, resource allocation, and evaluation efforts related to the overdose epidemic in Pennsylvania.

## Who can access the Pennsylvania PDMP System?

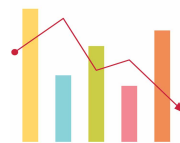
The PDMP System is a tool for health care providers and pharmacists to help them make safe prescribing or dispensing decisions for their patients and identify potential substance use disorder. The PDMP System also aids public safety, licensing, and fraud and abuse efforts by providing access to Commonwealth agencies including the Office of Attorney General, Department of State, Department of Human Services, and Managed Care Organizations. County and Municipal Health Departments, designated Commonwealth personnel, county coroners, and medical examiners may also access the PDMP System for public health initiatives and death investigations.

## PDMP System Timeline



## Accomplishments 2016 to 2023

**46% reduction** in the number of opioid dispensations to Pennsylvania residents.



**48% reduction** in the number of schedule II opioid dispensations.

**33% reduction** in the number of benzodiazepine dispensations.

**67% reduction** in the number of patients receiving a high dosage of opioids (over 90 MMEs).

**96% reduction** in the number of patients with Multiple Provider Episodes, which is known as "Doctor Shopping."

Doctor Shopping is the practice of seeing 5 (or more) prescribers and 5 (or more) dispensers within a 3-month period to fill controlled substance prescriptions.

**64% reduction** in the number of patients with 30 days of overlapping opioid and benzodiazepine prescriptions; a potentially dangerous combination of medications.



Pennsylvania  
Department of Health