



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Division of Health Professions Licensure

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
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JUDYANN BIGBY, MD  
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JOHN AUERBACH  
COMMISSIONER

Board of Registration in Pharmacy  
239 Causeway Street, Suite 500, 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
(800) 414-0168

<http://www.mass.gov/reg/boards/pharmacy>

To: Massachusetts Pharmacists

From: Stanley B. Walczyk, R.Ph., President  
Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy

Date: August 16, 2011

Re: Prescription Monitoring Program and Mandatory Educational  
Requirements for Prescribers (including Pharmacists participating in  
Collaborative Drug Therapy Management)

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The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy (Board) provides two important updates relating to pharmacy practice in the Commonwealth.

### **Prescription Monitoring Program**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) established the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) in 1992 pursuant to joint regulations of the Drug Control Program (105 CMR 700.006(J)) and the Board of Registration in Pharmacy (247 CMR 5.04). The PMP collects prescribing and dispensing information on Massachusetts Schedule II – V controlled substances dispensed pursuant to a prescription. The PMP utilizes the data collected to determine prescribing and dispensing trends; provide educational information to health care providers and the public; and provide case information to regulatory and law enforcement agencies concerning drug distribution and diversion.

To download a handbook and to obtain information regarding enrolling to use the Online PMP, click the following link: [Prescription Monitoring Program \(PMP\)](#).

**Mandatory Education Requirement for Prescribers - applicable to Pharmacists engaged in collaborative drug therapy management who are authorized to prescribe controlled substances pursuant to a Collaborative Practice Agreement (247 CMR 16.00)**

As of January 1, 2011, pursuant to [MGL c. 94C, section 18\(e\)](#), **all prescribers**, including pharmacists engaged in collaborative drug therapy management who are authorized to prescribe controlled substances pursuant to a collaborative practice agreement (247 CMR 16.00), upon **initial application** for a MA Controlled Substance Registration (MCSR) and **subsequently during each pharmacist licensure renewal (two year) period**, must complete education relative to:

- effective pain management;
- identification of patients at high risk for substance abuse; and
- counseling patients about the side effects, addictive nature and proper storage and disposal of prescription medications.

**NOTE:** This continuing education requirement is mandatory only for the initial MCSR application and renewal of license of pharmacists engaged in collaborative drug therapy management who are authorized to prescribe controlled substances pursuant to a collaborative practice agreement (247 CMR 16.00).

Boston University School of Medicine, with the cooperation with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine, DPH, the New England Division of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the Massachusetts Medical Society, and the Massachusetts Hospital Association, has developed presentations titled [Safe and Effective Opioid Prescribing for Chronic Pain](#) that meet the educational objectives of the statute.

The educational program is a web-based activity supported by funding from the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine, and by an unrestricted educational grant from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and is offered at no charge. At the completion of the program, a certificate for 3 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™ can be downloaded and printed. This continuing education offering is consistent with Board requirements at [247 CMR 4.00: Continuing Education](#) for the equivalent of 3 Contact Hours.

Please note that MGL c. 94C, section 18(e) does not specify a minimum number of contact hours to comply with this education requirement. Also, be advised that revised [Board Advisory #2009-01: Policy on the Management of Plan \(8/16/11\)](#) includes this education requirement for a Pharmacist authorized to prescribe controlled substances to a collaborative practice agreement.

Through your signature on the MCSR application and your pharmacist license renewal form, you attest, under penalties of perjury, to compliance with state tax and child support laws, mandatory reporting laws, and statutes regulations and relating to pharmacy practice, including continuing education requirements.

The Board reserves the right to require any pharmacist to submit written documentation satisfactory to the Board of his or her completion of all or part of such continuing education either individually or through a random audit process.

Additional information is also available on the Board of Registration in Pharmacy website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/boards/pharmacy>.