MA Prescription Monitoring Program County-Level Data Measures (Calendar Year 2013)

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality ● January 2015

The Department of Public Health's (DPH) Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMP) serves as a repository of data for all prescription drugs dispensed statewide, including those prescriptions that represent the highest potential for abuse (federal Schedules II – V, including certain narcotics, stimulants and sedatives) and are among those most sought for illicit and non-medical use. The PMP also enables prescribers and dispensers to access a patient's prescription history and can be used as a clinical decision-making tool, allowing the provider to have a holistic view of the patient's medications.

When interpreting PMP county-level data, it is important to emphasize that increases or decreases in a single measure may not indicate an increase or decrease in prescription misuse or abuse. Put simply, use does not always equate to abuse. There are many factors that might explain an unusually high rate of prescribing in a given area. For instance, an area which contains a large number of residents in long-term care facilities may cause a high rate of opioid prescribing.

These datasets inform critical discussions about opioid prescribing, provide an important baseline to better inform future policy decisions and allow the state and stakeholders to more meaningfully measure whether policy initiatives are effective.

County (County classifications are by patient zip code; patient state must also = MA)	**Census Population**	**Total Schedule II Opioid Prescriptions**	**Total Number of Schedule II Opioid Solid Dosage Units**	**Individuals Receiving Schedule II Opioid Prescription**	**% of Individuals Receiving Schedule II Opioid Prescription (of total population)**	**Individuals with Activity of Concern**	**Rate of Individuals with Activity of Concern (per 1,000)**
Barnstable	214,990	111,537	6,982,337	30,775	14.3	478	15.5
Berskhire	130,016	62,622	3,748,904	14,933	11.5	158	10.6
Bristol	552,780	295,564	18,815,778	72,211	13.1	1,137	15.7
Dukes	17,256	8,870	636,432	2,537	14.7	32	12.6
Essex	762,550	287,254	17,562,073	83,147	10.9	1,059	12.7
Franklin	71,221	43,813	2,877,031	10,364	14.6	107	10.3
Hampden	467,319	289,492	18,528,495	73,735	15.8	1,091	14.8
Hampshire	159,596	75,199	5,341,842	18,315	11.5	167	9.1
Middlesex	1,552,802	440,197	26,779,541	142,350	9.2	1,815	12.8
Nantucket	10,399	4,868	247,963	1,429	13.7	2	1.4
Norfolk	681,845	243,437	15,369,591	73,829	10.8	1,009	13.7
Plymouth	501,915	233,065	15,091,547	66,142	13.2	1,114	16.8
Suffolk	755,503	239,003	15,721,427	73,630	9.7	1,050	14.3
Worcester	809,106	341,518	24,599,809	88,956	11.0	1,296	14.6
MA TOTALS	**6,692,824**	**2,680,740**	**171,777,833**	**741,908**	**11.1**	**10,636**	**14.3**