



# Rhode Island Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Pharmacy Compliance and Enforcement

Updated September 17, 2021

## Background and Purpose

In Rhode Island, after seeing a decrease by 8.3% from 2016 to 2019, accidental drug overdose deaths increased by 25%, from 308 in 2019 to 384 in 2020. Illicit drugs and controlled substance prescriptions have both contributed to drug overdose deaths in our state.

The Rhode Island PDMP is a clinical tool that can help reduce overdose deaths and save lives. PDMP users, including pharmacists and prescribers, are an important link to identifying patients who may be at risk for overdose. Now more than ever, it is critical for pharmacists to report prescription data into the Rhode Island PDMP in a timely and accurate manner to reduce prescription drug misuse, dependence, drug interactions, and/or diversion.

Since July 1, 2016, all pharmacies with a controlled substance registration are required to report all dispensed controlled substances and opioid agonists to the Rhode Island PDMP every 24 hours under Rhode Island regulation [216-RICR-20-20-3](#). In addition, if no controlled substance prescriptions were dispensed, pharmacies must report “zero fills” to the PDMP every 24 hours. \*

**Overall, most pharmacies are reporting controlled substance prescription dispensing to the Rhode Island PDMP; however, compliance inconsistencies still occur.** As of June 25, 2021, there were 29 delinquent submitters (4.2% of registered pharmacies), with an average of 20 days’ delinquency. 82.8% of delinquent submitters were classified as out-of-state pharmacies.

## Three-Phase PDMP Enforcement

RIDOH developed a three-phase approach to enforce statewide PDMP compliance by all active Rhode Island CSR pharmacies. This approach requires the reporting of dispensing information to the Rhode Island PDMP within 24 hours. This enforcement is intended to increase reporting requirements, ensuring the Rhode Island PDMP remains a valuable source of information for prescribers and pharmacists.

- **Phase 1: Education (Completed)**

The PMP Awar<sub>x</sub>e™ and Appriss® Health *Data Submission Guide for Dispensers* was distributed to all active Rhode Island CSR pharmacies to provide details about data collection and submission. An updated *Data Submission Guide* can be accessed [here](#).

- **Phase 2: Notification (Completed)**

All pharmacies with a Rhode Island CSR were notified about the 24-hour reporting requirement and offered access to the *Data Submission Guide* via email. This phase provided an opportunity for pharmacies to engage in statewide efforts to submit timely data to the Rhode Island PDMP. During this phase, RIDOH did not initiate punitive consequences for pharmacies failing to submit data within the required 24-hour timeframe.

- **Phase 3: Enforcement (Initiated June 2021)**

RIDOH has initiated Phase 3, which holds pharmacies with a Rhode Island CSR accountable for non-compliance. Enforcement efforts ensure all pharmacies with a Rhode Island CSR contribute to statewide efforts to submit data to the Rhode Island PDMP in a timely and accurate manner.

## Compliance Checks and Enforcement Procedures

1. RIDOH data managers will download the delinquent pharmacies report twice per week (preferably by midweek and on Fridays), investigate the pharmacies'-controlled substance dispensing history, and contact any pharmacies that are more than seven days' delinquent.
  - a. Pharmacies will be contacted by phone or email.
  - b. Data managers will make a maximum of three attempts to contact non-responsive pharmacies.
  - c. If pharmacies do not have contact information or have inaccurate contact information in the PDMP:
    - i. Data managers will attempt to verify contact information in the License 2000 database.
    - ii. If needed, data managers will attempt to verify contact information with the RIDOH Licensing Unit.
    - iii. As a last effort, data managers will attempt to verify contact information with National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP).
2. Once the maximum number of contact attempts have been reached, the list of non-responsive pharmacies will be forwarded to RIDOH's PDMP Chief Health Program Evaluator for additional outreach.
  - a. **Rhode Island-based pharmacies:** RIDOH's Chief Health Program Evaluator will conduct an in-person visit to inform the pharmacy manager of the pharmacy's delinquent status and discuss compliance options.
    - i. If the pharmacy manager is not present, the Chief Health Program Evaluator will provide the on-duty pharmacist with a copy of the last email notification and follow-up contact information.
  - b. **Out-of-state pharmacies:** RIDOH's Chief Health Program Evaluator will notify the pharmacy of its delinquent status via a phone call and/or email.
3. Failure to respond to these contact attempts will result in RIDOH filing a complaint to the Rhode Island Board of Pharmacy against the non-responsive pharmacy and/or pharmacist.

\* It is recommended that dispensers cancel a CSR if there is no longer a need to report "zero fills" to the Rhode Island PDMP. Learn more about cancelling a CSR [here](#).