The Council of State Governments
National Center for Interstate Compacts

Prescription Drug Monitoring: Exploring Interstate Cooperation

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Background and Need

States continue to recognize the growing trend concerning the misuse of some prescription drugs, with particular emphasis on Schedule II - V pharmaceutical products. These drugs are increasingly being diverted for illicit purposes and in many cases are being illegally obtained from physicians and illegally sold by patients. According to SAMHSA's 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 60 percent of misused prescription drugs were obtained from a friend or relative, rather than more nefarious methods.

Thirty-three states currently have operational prescription drug monitoring programs or PDMPs (40 states have enacted PDMPs). The concept of policing the prescription and movement of these drugs is neither aversive nor unpopular. However, despite the significant accomplishments made by states, there is still a lack of uniformity, information sharing and cooperation across the country. An interoperable system of information sharing among the various state monitoring programs is likely to be the most reliable and effective means of assuring that these medicines are properly distributed.

The Council of State Governments (CSG), through its National Center for Interstate Compacts (NCIC), is exploring the use of an interstate compact as an appropriate tool to promote interstate cooperation and data sharing among jurisdictions related to state-based prescription drug monitoring programs. CSG is uniquely qualified to undertake this effort toward greater uniformity with its more than seventy-five years of experience in forging interstate compacts that affect the way states conduct business and effect meaningful change in the lives of American citizens.

Program

Through June 2010, CSG's compacts center will be engaged in the exploration of prescription drug monitoring programs and how such efforts can be handled on a cooperative interstate basis. The effort will include the creation and convening of a National Advisory Panel of issue experts, including: state officials and policymakers, academic researchers and representatives from the medical and

pharmaceutical industries. The group will examine the current policy landscape surrounding prescription drug monitoring programs, explore the growing trend of prescription drug abuse and its impacts and formulate recommendations on how states can better work together in addressing these concerns. Should the group decide that specific recommendations in the shape of a national or regional interstate compact are warranted, CSG will explore that program and funding as a separate project outside the scope of this initial phase.

The following tasks will be completed during the program period:

1. Conduct research in support of and in preparation for the convening of the National Advisory Panel. This examination will include policy research into current PDMP standards and operations, what additional state and local policies exist that may be aiding or hindering the development of such programs and what extra-ordinary or specialized concerns will be relevant to the Advisory Group.

2. Develop the National Advisory Panel to examine the current landscape of challenges and issues facing state PDMPs and to present a set of recommendations that can be considered in the development of the comprehensive interstate compact addressing the interstate information sharing of PDMP information and the bolstering of other drug tracking programs, namely pseudoephedrine. The National Advisory Panel will be composed of up to twenty issue and stakeholder experts from around the country with emphasis placed on state and federal officials and other policymakers as well as key external stakeholders.

3. Convene two 2-day meetings of the National Advisory Panel to discuss, review and establish a set of recommendations that may guide the development of a comprehensive interstate compact addressing issues affecting the interstate information sharing of PDMP information and the bolstering of other drug tracking programs.

4. Conduct follow-up to the National Advisory Panel including the development of formal recommendations, meeting summary and final report from the group.