Prescription Monitoring in Texas: Where Are We?
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Texas has had the Texas Prescription Program (TPP) to monitor CIIs since 1982 and in 2008 started monitoring CIII-V, but today physicians have easier accessibility to the monitoring program through PAT II, where they can login to the TPP via a website. In September 2011 a company, Optimum, received the contract for hosting and collecting the data for the TPP. Previously the hosting, development and data collection was done internally by Department of Public Safety (DPS). DPS had developed a website accessible version of the TPP (referred to as PAT I – Prescription Access in Texas) which went through several rounds of beta testing that began in August of 2011, while the traditional fax request method was still in place for the non beta testers.

Since receiving the contract, Optimum has started collecting the data (the "data" in this context is considered the information reported from the pharmacy to DPS regarding controlled substances) and working in conjunction with DPS, developed a revised web accessible version of the program. In June of this year, PAT II (phase II of PAT I) was tested by a small group of initial users. Today, all vetted users have been granted access and can use the web accessible version of PAT II (vetted users means law enforcement personnel and other users who have used and tested the program in the past).

The TPP receives between 40-45 million records per year and has a potential of over 150,000 users. Because of the large amount of users and information going through the system, and to ensure security and software compliance, PAT II is being rolled out in stages. State regulating boards and other validating registrants will be amongst the first roll outs this summer and by the end of August PATII will be fully available for registration for all physician registrants.

DPS will disseminate information to registrants informing them of the availability to register for PAT II through several different methods – including the DPS website, the regulating board's websites, trade and medical associations, etc. All potential registrants who would like to register to use PAT II will need to have a current medical license, a current DPS number and a current DEA number. Once registered for the site, there will be tutorials and an FAQ section for information about how the program works and how to navigate the site.

Texas Pain Society will have recommendations and best practices for their members about how this new online access to the program can be incorporated into their patient treatment plans. This is a very useful tool to help mitigate prescription drug abuse and diversion in Texas while balancing access to care for legitimate pain patients.