



Ensuring Safe and Responsible Use of Prescription Opioids

The Illinois College of Emergency Physicians (ICEP) supports legislation that will ensure safe use of prescription opioids, including improvement of the Prescription Monitoring Program and increased availability of naloxone.

Improvement of the Prescription Monitoring Program as a Clinical Tool for Providers

The Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) is a data clearinghouse containing information about patients' prescription history.

- Illinois needs to increase efforts to utilize federal funding to integrate PMP data into electronic health records and expand the only emergency room pilot program in Illinois to other hospitals and physician practices. Information from surrounding states should be added to the data.
- Currently, the information on the PMP is only updated by dispensers once a week. This delay in information means that patients who wish to evade the reporting of their prescription information have more of an opportunity to do so.
- It is vital that the information in the PMP remain confidential in order to protect a patient's private medical information.

Increased Availability of Naloxone

Naloxone is an opiate antagonist, meaning it can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. While some jurisdictions in Illinois have made initial efforts to distribute naloxone to first responders and Illinois law now provides some immunity to those who administer and prescribe naloxone, the following changes should be implemented in Illinois:

- Coordinate efforts to obtain naloxone and train first responders to administer this lifesaving drug in order to maximize the buying power of federal and other funding dollars.
- Improve current immunity provisions or "Good Samaritan" laws for friends, family, and first responders who administer naloxone, as well as for the medical professionals who prescribe and dispense naloxone.
- Consider efforts to expand the availability of naloxone to friends and family members through prescriptions, or utilize standing orders to make naloxone available in pharmacies.

Opposition to Policies that Will Interfere with the Doctor-Patient Relationship

ICEP opposes legislative changes that interfere with the doctor-patient relationship and impede efficient and effective patient care, including:

- Required screening of patients prior to receiving a prescription opioid, such as drug screenings or behavioral screenings. This requirement is not appropriate for emergency patients who may suffer acute injuries, such as broken bones or painful illnesses.
- Requirements directing prescribers to check the PMP prior to issuing a prescription.
- Mandatory continuing education requirements for physicians.