

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE MEDICAL TASK FORCE

JANUARY 2016: Summarizing the January 8, 2016 Meeting Discussion.

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**Next Meeting: April 8,
2016 at noon, right after
EMOC, San Diego County
Medical Society,
5575 Ruffin Road, San Diego.**

CURES 2.0 NOW LIVE!

CURES 2.0 officially launched on January 8. All providers must be registered by June of this year. Registration will take you 5 minutes. You no longer have to print any forms or get anything notarized. Simply enter your social security number, California license, and DEA. The hardest part is coming up with the 5 security questions, such as who was your first girlfriend? It would be a worthwhile mini QI project to make sure that all your providers are registered. CURES 1.0 is still available on the old browsers.

Last year the San Diego County Public Health Department was deputized by the CURES to manage applications without a notary. Many providers took advantage of this service. Sayone Thihalolipavan, MD, the County Deputy Public Health Officer, observed with no notary, and online authentication, that the County's CURES registration process is now obsolete. The online CURES registration is much simpler. Alicia Munoz with the Hospital Association reported that members of the Medication Safety committee were very pleased with CURES 2.0.

The Medical Task Force (MTF) created a user's guide to CURES 2.0 that is available on our web site. CURES has educational material and videos on their official web site. The MTF guide is a clinical supplemental guide. The new CURES 2.0 features include:

- Easy registration
- Changing user profile
- Dashboard - doctor shopping, morphine equivalents, methadone
- Save reports
- Excel or Standard printing of reports
- Delegate feature - may assign others to upload report, but they may not access the report
- Assign Compact - let others know that patient has medication agreement with you
- Communicate with providers - this is possible only with shared patients

The DEA will no longer be able to investigate doctor shopping due to a new subpoena standard from the California Attorney General's office. DEA will continue to investigate fraudulent prescriptions, pharmacies, and providers. The

medical community will need to work together on how to manage doctor shopping. For patients who have addiction, San Diego has two important treatment resources that are answered by real professionals who can give solid referral information:

- **2-1-1 San Diego** a free, 24/7 stigma-free phone service and database
- **888-724-7240**: County Access Line Crisis Line is staffed 24/7 by professionals to provide crisis phone service

Do You Have A Broken CURES Account?

Do you have a broken CURES account? Forgot username? Cannot log in?
Email: Tina.Farales@doj.ca.gov

Linda Bridgeman Smith, prevention manager with the County’s Health and Human Services Agency, said that if the Drug MediCal option is adopted by the County, more treatment resources and tools may be available.

How to Use CURES in Your Workplace?

Members noted that day-to-day processes and policies need to be established in order to support the use of CURES. Every workplace is different. One may print/scan the CURES request into the chart with the controlled medication agreement. Loretta Stenzel, MD, noted that they place the CURES report and Medication Agreement in the Medication section of their electronic health record. Her clinic uses the medication agreements for opioids and benzodiazepines, but not for sleep aids. With increased scrutiny of opioid prescriptions, Dr. Lev suggested that if the CURES system is down or inaccessible, that this problem be noted in the medical record. This documentation is recommended by law enforcement in New York where CURES access is mandatory.

Prescription Drug Abuse Pharmacy Committee

Nathan Painter, PharmD., and Kim Allen RPh, reported that the committee developed a guideline for identifying and reporting suspicious cases. The “Red Flag” tool will be disseminated, especially to independent pharmacies who may not have this resource. The tool is available on the SanDiegoSafePrescribing.org web site. Dr. Stenzel suggested a video or PSA could be a useful tool. Angela suggested several available at <http://www.drugfree.org/videos/>, a national group who spoke at the recent conference.

Dr. Painter described his recent trainings for pharmacies. With brief training, pharmacies can dispense Naloxone without a prescription to family members who may be in positions to reverse an opiate overdose. One challenge is that health insurance companies don’t recognize pharmacists as a provider, so they are not getting reimbursed. Pre-filled injections run about \$25, and the nasal 2-dose options run about \$35. The CDC guidelines recommend naloxone for patients on greater than 50 morphine equivalents per day.

When Should the Pharmacist Call the Doc?

Members decided to work on a tool for 2016 that would advise a pharmacist when to contact a prescriber. When health plans, dispensers/pharmacists and prescribers across medical settings are all on one page about safe prescribing –it will be easier to implement and prevention will happen. We will be sending the guideline out for comment.

The CDC Guidelines

Bianca Trebuzio, MD, noted that the Medical Board of California and the CDC have guidelines about chronic opioid prescribing. The Task Force will ask all members to write supporting comments to the CDC guidelines. There are over 2000 comments to date, with much opposition from the pharmaceutical industry.

Turning Off the Faucet with Health Plans

We hope to create a community standard with San Diego's health plans, similar to what we did with emergency departments. Turning off the faucet from the top is predicted to have the greatest effect on reducing prescription related deaths and morbidity. Roneet Lev described early work with Community Health Group (CHG) and their P & T committee. CHG has made some formulary changes that included methadone prescribing by pain specialists only, and making Soma off-formulary. Indian Health Council took Soma off the formulary a few months ago. The VA system avoids benzodiazepine and opioid combination. The Task Force will be working on Safe Prescribing Guidelines for health plans based on the CDC guidelines and our medical examiner data.

Pediatricians on the Safe Prescribing Team

Pediatricians are in the best position to prevent addiction. Although most people die at age 45 from prescriptions, addiction starts in middle school. While teenagers are getting their vaccines before high school, they may hear about helmet safety, but they should also hear about locking up medication at home and at grandma's house. Dr. Lev has a meeting next month with local pediatrician to discuss this prevention opportunity.

Patient Satisfaction Scores The CMA and ACEP both passed resolutions that oppose linkage of patient satisfaction scores to financial incentives without evidence-based medicine. CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, manages the financial incentives and claims there is no correlation with satisfaction scores and prescribing. The jury is not out on whether there is a direct correlation with scores and prescriptions. However, there is a strong belief that patient satisfaction is an obstacle to safe prescribing. How often have you witnessed giving a prescription, even a small one, just in order to avoid drama and complaints?

MEDICAL EXAMINER: CLOSING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

The San Diego County Medical Examiner in collaboration with USC received a grant from the California Health Care Foundation (CHCF) to evaluate the effects of giving feedback to physicians who prescribed controlled medication to people who died from an accidental prescription drug overdose. Prescribing patterns will be reviewed before and after receiving a courtesy letter informing a physician of a patient death.

The San Diego ME office and Dr. Lev have a few publications reviewing all 254 San Diego prescription related deaths in 2013 that involved 713 different providers and over 4000 prescriptions. You can see this report on our web site: SanDiegoSafePrescribing.org - Relevant Reports & Articles: "Who is Prescribing Controlled Medications to Patients Who Die from Prescription Drug Abuse."

