

Restricting access to prescribing
data should be every physician's
individual choice

PDRP: The choice is yours





The AMA's PDRP:

The fairest and most reasonable way to respect all physicians' viewpoints on a complex issue



Physicians have widely varying attitudes on whether their prescribing data should be shared with pharmaceutical sales representatives.

To assess the depth of concern about representatives' use of prescribing data, the American Medical Association (AMA), working with Gallup, conducted a national survey of physicians. It uncovered one major point of agreement: 84 percent of physicians either were not concerned or reported their concerns would be alleviated if they had a chance to opt out of sharing prescribing data with reps.

Accordingly, the AMA Board of Trustees recommended and the AMA House of Delegates overwhelmingly approved a plan to create the Physician Data Restriction Program (PDRP). Introduced in July 2006, the PDRP empowers all physicians to make their own choice.

The PDRP responsibly honors the opinions of all physicians—and provides a more reasonable alternative to a “one-size-fits-all” legislative ban that ignores vital aspects of prescribing data use.



The AMA's PDRP:

An enforceable plan that puts the
decision in the right hands



The AMA does not collect, sell or have access to prescribing data. But, health information organizations (HIO) match the AMA's Physician Masterfile to prescribing data from other sources. The HIOs then license the combination of prescribing data and the AMA Physician Masterfile to pharmaceutical companies. This situation enables the AMA to enforceably assure compliance with the PDRP.

In practice, the program is simple and extremely easy for all physicians to use. Physicians just visit a Web site (www.ama-assn.org/go/prescribingdata) to opt out of having their prescribing data released to pharmaceutical representatives. Pharmaceutical companies are required to check the opt-out list a minimum of quarterly, and they then have 90 days to comply with the request.

As an extra service, the program also allows physicians to report specific instances of inappropriate behavior by pharmaceutical sales reps or companies.

PDRP puts the opt-out choice into the hands of physicians—the professionals most qualified to make informed decisions.



The AMA's PDRP:

A path to protect prescribing
data without drastic, unintended
consequences



The PDRP gives physicians an effective opt-out mechanism to address their concerns about the use of prescribing data. At the same time, it also ensures that vital information on prescribing patterns will continue to be available for beneficial public health purposes. Some of these include evidence-based medical research, structuring clinical trials, efficient drug recalls, aiding the Food and Drug Administration's ongoing post-approval assessment of drug benefits vs. risks, and many other uses.

Along these lines, the AMA will soon introduce a new information resource in cooperation with various state and specialty medical societies. Designed to increase the transparency of prescribing data, *AMA Therapeutic Insights*, a Web-based newsletter, will focus on one therapeutic topic per quarter, providing evidence-based guidelines, including local and national prescribing data, for physician self-evaluation and Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit.

Phase II of the project will allow a physician to compare his or her individual prescribing habits with those of peer groups.

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The PDRP is a fair, comprehensive program that gives physicians the control they want over pharmaceutical sales representatives' access to prescribing data. Already in place and functioning, it frees up legislators and physician advocates to work on critical issues affecting medical care, such as health insurance reform.

To exercise your PDRP opt-out privilege—or simply to learn more about the program—visit the AMA Prescribing Data Information Center at www.ama-assn.org/go/prescribingdata.*

** Security purposes require you to use your AMA User ID and password to enroll in the PDRP. If you have no AMA User ID, you can set one up simply by providing your state and date of birth.*

