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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS - UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Fellela, Messier, Ucci, and Lima

Date Introduced: June 10, 2016

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 21-28-3.32 of the General Laws in Chapter 21-28 entitled "Uniform  
2 Controlled Substances Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **21-28-3.32. Electronic prescription database.** -- (a) The information contained in any  
4 prescription drug monitoring database maintained by the department of health pursuant to § 21-  
5 28-3.18 of this chapter shall be disclosed only:

6 (1) To a practitioner who certifies that the requested information is for the purpose of  
7 evaluating the need for, or providing medical treatment to, a current patient to whom the  
8 practitioner is prescribing or considering prescribing a controlled substance;

9 (2) To a pharmacist who certifies that the requested information is for a current client to  
10 whom the pharmacist is dispensing, or considering dispensing, a controlled substance;

11 (3) To an authorized designee of the practitioner and/or pharmacist to consult the  
12 prescription drug monitoring database on the practitioner's and/or pharmacist's behalf, provided  
13 that:

14 (i) The designee so authorized is employed by the same professional practice or  
15 pharmacy;

16 (ii) The practitioner or pharmacist takes reasonable steps to ensure that such designee is  
17 sufficiently competent in the use of the database;

18 (iii) The practitioner or pharmacist remains responsible for ensuring that access to the  
19 database by the designee is limited to authorized purposes as provided for in subsections (a)(1)

1 and (a)(2) of this section;

2 (iv) The practitioner or pharmacist remains responsible for ensuring access to the  
3 database by the designee occurs in a manner that protects the confidentiality of information  
4 obtained from the database and remains responsible for any breach of confidentiality;

5 (v) The practitioner or pharmacist terminates the designee's access to the database at the  
6 termination of the designee's employment; and

7 (vi) The ultimate decision as to whether or not to prescribe or dispense a controlled  
8 substance remains with the practitioner or pharmacist and is reasonably informed by the relevant  
9 controlled substance history information obtained from the database.

10 (4) Pursuant to a valid search warrant based on probable cause to believe a violation of  
11 federal or state criminal law has occurred and that specified information contained in the database  
12 would assist in the investigation of the crime;

13 (5) To a patient who requests his or her own prescription information, or the parent or  
14 legal guardian of a minor child who requests the minor child's prescription information;

15 (6) To a health professional regulatory board that documents, in writing, that the  
16 requested information is necessary for an investigation related to licensure, renewal, or  
17 disciplinary action involving the applicant, licensee, or registrant to whom the requested  
18 information pertains;

19 (7) To any vendor or contractor with whom the department has contracted, [pursuant to](#)  
20 [state purchasing law and regulations in the contracting of vendors](#), to establish or maintain the  
21 electronic system of the prescription drug monitoring database; or

22 (8) To public or private entities for statistical, research, or educational purposes, after  
23 removing the patient and prescriber information that could be used to identify individual patients.  
24 This shall not include entities receiving a waiver from the institutional review board.

25 (b) Information stored in the prescription drug monitoring database shall include only the  
26 following:

27 (1) Patient's first and last name, and/or patient identification number; provided, however,  
28 the patient's social security number shall not be recorded in whole or in part, patient sex, patient  
29 date of birth, and patient address;

30 (2) Prescribing practitioner's name and drug enforcement administration prescriber  
31 information number;

32 (3) Prescribing practitioner's office or hospital contact information;

33 (4) Prescription name, prescription number, prescription species code, national drug code  
34 number, prescription dosage, prescription quantity, days' supply, new-refill code, number of

1 refills authorized, date the prescription was written, date the prescription was filled, payment  
2 type; provided, however, no credit card number shall be recorded in whole or in part; and

3 (5) The drug enforcement administration pharmacy number of the pharmacy filling the  
4 prescription.

5 (c) The department shall disclose any information relating to a patient maintained in the  
6 prescription drug monitoring database to that patient, at no cost to the patient, within thirty (30)  
7 business days after the department receives a written request from the patient for the information.  
8 This information shall include the records maintained by the department pursuant to subsection  
9 (e). Notwithstanding the above, the department may, at the request of the law enforcement  
10 agency, withhold for up to sixty (60) days following the conclusion of a law enforcement  
11 investigation, the disclosure to the patient that information has been obtained pursuant to  
12 subdivision (a)(3).

13 (d) A patient may request, from the dispensing pharmacy, correction of any inaccurate  
14 information contained within the prescription drug monitoring database in accordance with the  
15 procedure specified by § 5-37.3-5(c).

16 (e) The department shall, for the period of time that prescription information is  
17 maintained, maintain records of the information disclosed through the prescription drug  
18 monitoring database, including, but not limited to:

19 (1) The identity of each person who requests or receives information from the  
20 prescription drug monitoring database and the organization, if any, the person represents;

21 (2) The information released to each person or organization and the basis for its release  
22 under subsection (a); and

23 (3) The dates the information was requested and provided.

24 (f) Prescription information contained within the prescription drug monitoring database  
25 shall be removed no later than five (5) years from the date the information is entered into the  
26 database. Records in existence prior to the enactment of this section shall be removed no later  
27 than ten (10) years from the date the information is entered into the database.

28 (g) The department shall promptly notify any affected individual of an improper  
29 disclosure of information from the prescription drug monitoring database or a breach in the  
30 security of the prescription drug monitoring database that poses a significant risk of disclosure of  
31 patient information to an unauthorized individual.

32 (h) At the time of signing a prescription that is required by the department to be entered  
33 into the prescription drug monitoring database, the prescribing practitioner shall inform the  
34 patient in writing of the existence of the prescription drug monitoring database, the patient's right

1 to access their own prescription information, and the name and contact information of the agency  
2 operating the program.

3 (i) No person shall access information in the prescription monitoring database except to  
4 the extent and for the purposes authorized by subsection (a).

5 (j) In any civil action allowing a violation of this chapter, the court may award damages,  
6 including punitive damages, and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs to a prevailing plaintiff, and  
7 injunctive and any other appropriate relief.

8 (k) Any pharmacist who, in his or her professional judgment, refuses to fill a prescription  
9 based on information contained within the prescription drug monitoring database shall inform the  
10 prescribing physician within twenty-four (24) hours.

11 (l) All practitioners shall, as a condition of the initial registration or renewal of the  
12 practitioner's authority to prescribe controlled substances, register with the prescription drug  
13 monitoring database maintained by the department of health.

14 (m) The department shall improve the usefulness and value of the prescription drug  
15 monitoring database program by increasing its analytical functionality, timeliness, and scope,  
16 such as by:

17 (1) Utilizing data from additional data sources as permissible under state and federal  
18 statutes;

19 (2) Analyzing information submitted to the prescription drug monitoring database to  
20 ensure that prescription data collected from dispensing pharmacists is readily accessible for a  
21 given patient; to identify unusual or aberrant patterns of prescribing, dispensing or receiving  
22 controlled substances; and to generate an automatic alert when such patterns arise to automate  
23 standard reports and to provide ad hoc reports on a real time basis on this data as well as other  
24 data feeds. These reports shall comply with the patient confidentiality requirements of federal and  
25 state law;

26 (3) Developing regulations to ensure that prescription drug monitoring analyses are  
27 updated and disseminated regularly to appropriate officials and that summary reports are provided  
28 to the general assembly on or before February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Given the intent to decrease the  
29 number of Rhode Island citizens affected by opioid use, the department shall provide an interim  
30 report on the status of the directives included herein and any progress made as of October 1,  
31 2016. In the development of said regulations, the department may include any of the following  
32 analytical functions, within the boundaries of patient confidentiality rights under state and federal  
33 law;

34 (i) Consolidate raw prescription data collected from dispensing pharmacists into a single

1 view of all prescriptions filed for a given patient;

2 (ii) Identify unusual or aberrant patterns of prescribing controlled substances, by relevant  
3 prescriber attributes, and generate an automatic alert when such patterns arise;

4 (iii) Identify unusual or aberrant patterns of receiving prescriptions for controlled  
5 substances, by relevant patient attributes, and generate an automatic alert when such patterns  
6 arise;

7 (iv) Identify unusual or aberrant patterns of dispensing controlled substances, by relevant  
8 dispenser attributes, and generate an automatic alert when such patterns arise;

9 (v) Identify and visually display linkages among prescribers, patients, and dispensers that  
10 can be used to detect any collusive behaviors; and

11 (vi) The department shall apply for federal funding in support of the goals and objectives  
12 contained in subsection (8)(m) herein.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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1           This act would improve the usefulness and value of the prescription drug monitoring  
2 database program by adding analytical functions, requiring program updates at least weekly, and  
3 incorporating data from similar programs in other states.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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