



Established 1852

# Lehigh County Medical Society

The mission of the Lehigh County Medical Society is to encourage physicians and healthcare professionals to have the highest moral and ethical standards; to counsel and censure them when necessary; to serve as a strong and united voice for our Lehigh County physicians, our patients and our community; to promote healthful living and well-being and to advance the highest standards of healthcare and service in our region through education, service and advocacy.

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The DR Bulletin

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### Prescription Drug Database Soon a Reality for PA Physicians

On Oct. 27, Gov. Tom Corbett signed a new law that will give Pennsylvania physicians access to a statewide controlled substances database, giving them better knowledge of prescriptions written for and filled by a patient.

Sen. Pat Vance, Gov. Tom Corbett, Rep. Matt Baker, and several other stakeholders, including Carrie DeLone, MD, Pennsylvania Physician General; Gary Tennis, Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs; Michael Wolf, Secretary of the Department of Health; and Michael Fraser, PhD, CAE, executive vice president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society.

Pennsylvania physicians have lacked an important tool that could help them better deal with patients they are treating who are doctor shoppers — patients who bounce

from physician to physician looking to score prescription drugs — and not in legitimate pain. But, that will soon change.

SB 1180 will create a controlled substances database called the Achieving Better Care by Monitoring All Prescriptions Program (ABC-MAP) within the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

The bill takes effect June 30, 2015, other than creation of an oversight board, which will take effect 90 days after the bill's enactment. The program will sunset, unless renewed by legislation, on June 30, 2022.

"By using prescription drug monitoring data, Pennsylvania physicians will have a tool to help them determine if the person sitting in their exam room is a doctor shopper, a person with an addiction, or a patient with legitimate pain," said Bruce MacLeod, MD, immediate past-president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED), in a previous statement written during his presidency.

"The Pennsylvania Medical Society believes that SB 1180 and other recent state actions such as opioid prescribing guidelines, making naloxone available to first responders and friends and family of at-risk individuals, and prescription drug drop off locations will save lives," he said.

#### Key provisions in the bill include:

##### *Prescribers*

Not required to submit prescribing information to the program, but will be required to:

Query the database the first time they prescribe each patient a controlled substance or if he or she believes, using sound clinical judgment, that a patient may be abusing or diverting drugs.

Lehigh County Medical Society, 1620 W Highland St, Allentown, PA 18102-1033  
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Manuscripts offered for publication and other correspondence should be sent to 1620 W Highland St, Allentown, PA.

The DR Bulletin is published six times a year bi-monthly, beginning in January, by the Lehigh County Medical Society.

The editorial board reserves the right to reject and/or alter submitted material before publication. All manuscripts and letters should be typed double-spaced on 8 1/2" x 11" stationary.

The opinions expressed in these pages are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the Lehigh County Medical Society.

The ad material is for the information and consideration of the reader. It does not necessarily represent an endorsement or recommendation by the Lehigh County Medical Society.

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Include the information obtained from the database in the patient's medical record for new patients or if they determine a drug should not be prescribed to a patient based upon the information obtained from the database.

Able to designate employees who can access the database, but must give preference to a professional nurse licensed by the State Board of Nursing, if one is available.

Able to query the program for an existing patient and prescriptions written using his or her own DEA number.

#### ***Dispensers***

Required to submit information to the database within 72 hours after dispensing a controlled substance. Prescribers who dispense at licensed health care facilities will be exempt from this requirement if the quantity they dispensed is limited to an amount adequate to treat a patient for a maximum of five days, with no refills.

Able to query the database for a current patient to whom he or she is dispensing or considering dispensing any controlled substance.

An exception also exists for dispensers and prescribers who are unable to submit the required data electronically, allowing them to manually submit the data if they don't have Internet access.

#### ***Access to the database***

All law enforcement and grand jury queries of the database must be funneled through the Attorney General's (AG) office. Each designee of the AG who queries the database must have a unique identifier.

In the case where a law enforcement agency has accessed the database for an active investigation, the information about that query must be withheld from the individual subject to the query for a period of six months after the conclusion of the investigation.

The AG's office will be able to query the database on behalf of federal and state law enforcement officials without restriction for Schedule II controlled substances. For all other schedules, the AG's office will be able to query the database on behalf of federal and state law enforcement officials only upon receipt of a court order pursuant to an active investigation.

Access will be granted to officials from various state agencies and departments who are authorized to conduct research or queries for specific state-related purposes.

#### ***Liability Protections, Criminal Offenses, and Civil Violations***

Includes key liability protection for physicians and other prescribers and dispensers for submitting information or not seeking information from the program prior to prescribing or dispensing.

Other criminal and civil penalties are included in the law for using the database for fraudulent or criminal purposes.

#### ***Oversight Board***

The program will be run by a board consisting of the Secretaries of Health (who serves as chairperson), Human Services, Drug and Alcohol Programs, State, Aging, the Insurance Commissioner, the State Police Commissioner, the Attorney General, and the Physician General if the Secretary of Health is not a physician.

The board will appoint an advisory group comprised of dispensers, prescribers, law enforcement officials, addiction specialists, patient and privacy advocates, and other individuals with expertise.

The advisory group will help them with work with prescribers, the licensing boards, state agencies and others to establish criteria for referral to the licensing boards, written public notices, standards for identifying at-risk individuals, and other protocols, training, and support for those using the system.

The bill also calls for the AG's office, in conjunction with law enforcement, to submit an annual report to the General Assembly within two years, and annually thereafter.

"This bill brings Pennsylvania on par with many other states who have implemented a controlled substances database," said Dr. MacLeod, noting that PAMED will be working with its physician leaders and members to make sure that access to patient information is protected.

"The passage of this bill is a historic step to help improve the health of Pennsylvanians through rapid detection of pill shoppers across the state," he said.

PAMED also thanks the many champions of this issue — Gov. Corbett, Sen. Vance, Rep. Baker, House Leader Mike Turzai, Rep. Bryan Cutler, Rep. Gene DiGirolamo, and Rep. Doyle Hefley to name a few. Thank the legislators that voted yes.

### **Save the Date**

Annual Social  
April 25th, 2015  
Lehigh Country Club

### **ATTENTION**

### **Lehigh County Medical Society MEMBERS**

#### **Does your Physician Group have a Website?**

Contact the Lehigh County Medical Society  
and have your Website linked onto the  
Lehigh County Medical Society Website.

**[www.lcmedsoc.org](http://www.lcmedsoc.org)**

Call: 610-437-2288

### **NOTE**

**Members of the  
Lehigh County Medical Society can now view the  
membership roster (Physician Directory) at our  
website: [www.lcmedsoc.org](http://www.lcmedsoc.org) or request a Member-  
ship Roster by calling the Lehigh County Medical  
Society at: 610-437-2288.**

### Find Out What You Need to Know about Pennsylvania's New Child Abuse Laws

Pennsylvania is getting geared up for the implementation of significant changes to our Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), most of which go into effect Dec. 31, 2014.

As you may recall, the law was amended to address concerns with the adequacy of protections for abused children in Pennsylvania. These concerns have been addressed in the new law. As a result, modifications are being made to the reporting processes, as well as training and education for stakeholders statewide.

Physicians and other health care professional will continue to play a major role in the state's efforts to prevent child abuse; however, the amended law includes added responsibility. Key changes in the law impacting physicians include: The new definition of child abuse is more specific and has been expanded.

Physicians will need to report suspected child abuse identified in certain circumstances outside their professional capacity.

Physicians will no longer be able to fulfill their reporting obligation simply by making a report to their supervisor or other designated person in their workplace.

The penalties for failing to make a mandatory report are increased.

Physicians have new mandatory child abuse recognition and reporting training requirements as a condition of licensure

The increased penalties already are in effect. The remainder of the amendments will take effect at the end of this year. The Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) has developed a suite of materials to help physicians understand the child abuse law changes, including

An overview of the physician's reporting requirement, <http://www.pamedsoc.org/MainMenuCategories/Laws-Politics/Analysis/Laws-Analysis/Child-abuse/Child-abuse-reporting-2.html>

An explanation of the expanded definition child abuse, <http://www.pamedsoc.org/MainMenuCategories/Laws-Politics/Analysis/Laws-Analysis/Child-abuse/Child-abuse-definitions.pdf>

Frequently asked questions, <http://www.pamedsoc.org/MainMenuCategories/Laws-Politics/Analysis/Laws-Analysis/Child-abuse/Child-abuse-FAQs.html>

Risk factors, signs, and symptoms of child abuse, <http://www.pamedsoc.org/MainMenuCategories/Laws-Politics/Analysis/Laws-Analysis/Child-abuse/Recognizing-responding-to-child-abuse.pdf>

Due to the importance of this issue to children, PAMED is making these resources available to all Pennsylvania physicians.

Under the amended CPSL, all physicians seeking to renew their license on or after Jan. 1, 2015, will need to complete two hours of approved training on child abuse recognition and reporting as a condition of licensure. However, if you renew an unrestricted license before Dec. 31, 2014, you will have until 2016 (when these licenses are scheduled to be renewed again) to meet the new training requirement.

### Lehigh County Medical Society Welcomes the following New Members

Maha S. Alchaer, MD (FM)  
3570 Hamilton Blvd Ste 201, Allentown, PA 18103

Vivek C. Angadi, MD (AN)  
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Mark E Velarde, MD (FM)  
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### REMEMBER

If you change your business or home address and/or phone or fax number, please notify the Lehigh County Medical Society. Call: 610-437-2288

*The mission of the Lehigh County Medical Society* is to encourage physicians and healthcare professionals to have the highest moral and ethical standards; to counsel and censure them when necessary; to serve as a strong and united voice for our Lehigh County physicians, our patients and our community; to promote healthful living and well-being and to advance the highest standards of healthcare and service in our region through education, service and advocacy.

The vision of the Lehigh County Medical Society is to be a relevant and influential leader in the Pennsylvania Medical Society; to unite our physicians and to empower them to deliver compassionate, ethical and evidence based healthcare of the highest quality and value to our community.

The Lehigh County Medical Society will accomplish its mission and its vision by the following:

Legislative Advocacy within our State Medical Society and our Government  
Community Education within the Public Health Arena  
Member Education, Collaborative Relationships and Collegiality  
Service Activities for our members and our community

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