



Nova Scotia Prescription Monitoring Program Expands

October 4, 2018

Halifax, NS—The Nova Scotia Prescription Monitoring Program (NSPMP) announced it will expand the scope of its monitoring services to integrate benzodiazepines into its collection of prescription dispensing data.

The NSPMP tracks the utilization of monitored drugs in the province and provides reporting and support services that promote good prescribing practices and inform research activities. Benzodiazepines are sedating medications that can play an important role in many patient support regimens. Collection of prescription data will inform prescribers and other program stakeholders on prescribing practices and use of the drugs in Nova Scotia. These learnings can help to reduce associated risks such as interactions with other medications, over-sedation, and potential injury or overdose. The NSPMP currently monitors various drugs also listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, such as opioids and stimulants, and is adding benzodiazepines as part of its 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

Monitoring of these widely prescribed drugs will provide registered prescribers and other stakeholders with access to prescribing data, online patient profiles, and other services of the NSPMP including support on prescribing practices. The NSPMP is engaging prescribers to assist in registering with the Program in advance of the data integration.

“We’re proud of the many enhancements made to the Prescription Monitoring Program over the years and see this expansion as another step in serving our mandate to Nova Scotians,” said Dr. Gus Grant, Chair of the PMP Board. “I look forward to continuing to work together with our stakeholders to support good practice among our community of prescribers,” he added.

The NSPMP’s Strategic Plan also prioritizes support for the goals and objectives of the Nova Scotia Opioid Use and Overdose Framework. Over the next five months, the NSPMP will work with partners and stakeholder groups to support the First Prescription Initiative and tailor monitoring approaches to focus on initial prescriptions of opioids and help prevent overprescribing for acute pain.

Established by the Prescription Monitoring Act in 2005, the NSPMP has evolved over the years. Enhancements have included integration with the provincial Drug Information System (DIS) and the establishment of an online application (eAccess) that enables prescribers and pharmacists to access program data 24/7. NSPMP staff and Board of Directors are committed to continue working with program stakeholders to implement this expansion and pursue further enhancements that will benefit the Program and residents of Nova Scotia.

Integration of benzodiazepine data will take effect October 20, 2018.

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About the NSPMP

The Nova Scotia Prescription Monitoring Program (NS PMP) is a provincially-funded program that works to promote the appropriate use and to reduce the abuse and misuse of monitored drugs in Nova Scotia. The NSPMP monitors all prescriptions for monitored drugs filled in Nova Scotia pharmacies, collects data to complete analysis and reporting which informs stakeholders on the prescribing and use of monitored drugs, and provides a variety of services to prescribers and pharmacists to assist them in the appropriate use of monitored drugs.

The NSPMP is governed by an independent Board of Directors responsible for developing policy and overseeing the operation of the Program.

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