



For Immediate Release
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Opioid Prescribing in Ohio Down 325 Million Doses in 2018 Report Demonstrates Ohio's Continued Progress in Promoting Safe Prescribing

March 11, 2019 – Columbus, Ohio – The number of prescription opioids dispensed to Ohioans declined for the sixth consecutive year in 2018, according to a [newly released report](#) from the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy's Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS).

From 2012 to 2018, the total number of opioids dispensed to Ohio patients decreased by 325 million doses or 41 percent. During the same period, the total number of opioid prescriptions issued to Ohioans decreased by 4.6 million.

The report also finds prescribers and pharmacists utilizing OARRS at record levels. In 2018, more than 142 million patient reports were requested by healthcare providers. With such expanded use of the system, the number of Ohioans engaging in doctor shopping behavior decreased by 89 percent last year.

"We all have a role to play in battling this public health crisis, and this continued downward trend in opioid prescriptions demonstrates that Ohio's prescribers are making significant progress in their efforts to prevent addiction," said Governor DeWine. "When this crisis first emerged, prescribers were led to believe that opioids were not addictive, but we know today that is not the case. It is encouraging to see such substantial progress to limit opioid prescriptions to stop painkiller abuse and diversion."

Established in 2006, OARRS collects information on all outpatient prescriptions for controlled substances and two non-controlled substances (gabapentin and naltrexone) dispensed by Ohio-licensed pharmacies and personally furnished by Ohio prescribers. OARRS data is available to prescribers when they treat patients, pharmacists when presented with prescriptions from patients and law enforcement officers and regulatory agencies during active investigations.

"The Board is proud of the advances it has made to increase the use of OARRS to promote responsible prescribing and improved patient outcomes," said State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy Executive Director Steven W. Schierholt. "Since implementing the first statewide integration program in the nation, more than 41,000 pharmacists and prescribers have instant access to OARRS as part of their workflow."

An executive summary of the report can be accessed by visiting:
www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/Summary2018

The complete 2018 OARRS Annual Report can be accessed by visiting:
www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/OARRS2018

Updated county level data for 2018 can be accessed by visiting: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/county

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