

PREScriber REPORT CARDS MOST FREQUENT FAQs

Purpose of the Prescriber Report Cards

Many prescribers are unaware of the volume of scripts and pills they write for controlled substances. Some believe that only one or two major “pill mills” or “candyman” prescribers are creating the problem. The report cards were developed as a method of raising awareness among individual prescribers about their own prescribing habits and to promote responsible prescribing in line with best practice guidelines. Generated once per quarter using the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) data, the number of scripts and pills of any one prescriber is compared to the rate among prescribers of his/her specialty type (e.g., Surgeons to other Surgeons, Dentists to other Dentists and Psychiatrists to other Psychiatrists). Five categories of drugs are included in the report card, (i.e., Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Other Pain Relievers, Benzodiazapines, and Carisoprodol) based on data that identified them as the most commonly prescribed, most commonly misused and most commonly associated with the majority of drug-related Emergency Department visits and drug poisoning deaths in Arizona. Given the rise of Rx drug-related deaths Arizona over the past few years, it is also becoming increasingly important to highlight prescribing patterns related to high-dose patients (e.g., those exceeding Morphine Milligram Equivalent thresholds) and dangerous drug combinations.

Frequently Asked Questions About The Report Cards

Although the report cards are a state-level strategy and require no direct action from the community, from time to time, you or your medical champion(s) may get a question from a prescriber about them. Below is a list of the most commonly asked questions about the report cards and some ways to help you answer them. If you don’t feel comfortable answering questions about the report cards, don’t worry. You can always direct the person who is asking to the State Board of Pharmacy at CSPMP@azpharmacy.gov. This is simply a guide to keep you informed and to help you in your dialogue and relationship-building with prescribers.

(FAQs continued on backside)



Q: How can I change my specialty?

A: Specialty type was derived from how the prescriber self-selected his/her specialty type at the regulatory board. Extant databases from Medicare/Medicaid providers are also used to assign specialty type. If a prescriber believes that they are in the wrong category, have them contact the State Board of Pharmacy pmp@azpharmacy.gov to have the specialty type changed in future iterations of the report card.

Q: There are only a few e.g., Nurse Practitioners in my county and I see almost all the patients/am the only full-time practitioner of my specialty type. How is this a fair comparison?

A: If there are fewer than 20 specialty providers of any one type in a geographic area, the provider is listed in the next category most-relevant (e.g., Nurse Practitioners working in an emergency department would be compared to other emergency department providers, while Nurse Practitioners working in Primary Care or Family Practice would be compared to other Primary Care Physicians). This minimizes the unfair comparison that could happen with a low number of providers.

Q: How do I see which patients went to more than 5 doctors/ pharmacies?

A: Unfortunately, we don't currently have a way to send patient names for the 5+ docs, 5+ pharmacies, however, monthly, the Board of Pharmacy does send out letters with lists of patients who went to 4+ prescribers AND 4+ pharmacies to all those patients' prescribers. You can also do a practitioner self-lookup to get a list of your patients and then run a search on individual patients on azrxreporting.com.

Q: I registered for the CSPMP but my report card states that I don't have access?

A: There are two steps to gain access to patient records. If you are registered it does not indicate that you have access to the patient data.

Q: These numbers on the report card don't seem correct. What can I do?

A: Double check that you are reading the report correctly and that you are indicated as blue and your peers are red. Verify the information by pulling your own report. If something is incorrect within the report, please contact the pharmacy listed and verify if the pharmacy made a mistake or if it is a fraudulent prescription. If the pharmacy submitted incorrect information then the pharmacy needs to correct the information and resubmit the data.

Q: How is an "outlier" determined?

A: Outliers are statistically determined through Z scores. Those prescribers who fall 1, 2 or 3 Standard Deviations above the mean for pills or scripts in any one drug category relative to other prescribers of their specialty type are flagged as outliers and urged to review their prescribing habits.

Q: How can I look up the prescriptions that are under my DEA?

A: You can check your prescriptions on www.azrxreporting.com under "Request" > "Practitioner Self-Lookup" to make sure the record is accurate. If you do not have access yet, you can use pharmacymp.az.gov for more information about registration and accessing the data.

