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Over-prescribing and Medical Board Enforcement: How to Avoid Discipline

From the article:

State medical boards take the inappropriate overprescribing of controlled medication very seriously. For this reason, it is important to take appropriate steps to protect yourself from mistakes that can lead to overprescribing enforcement actions by your medical board. Many physicians may feel that it may be difficult for medical boards to monitor prescriptions, but in some states, this is actually not the case.

Several states have internal databases that monitor prescriptions. In Florida, legislators recently enacted laws placing restrictions on physicians dispensing controlled substances as well as reporting mandates for physicians treating chronic pain. As a result, disciplinary actions by the Florida Board of Medicine jumped from 215 actions in 2010 to 332 in 2011.[1] California, for example, has a state database for drug prescribing known as the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System, commonly called CURES. There are over 100 million entries on the CURES database.[2]

One of the devices the California Medical Board uses is a patient activity report.[3] The patient activity report contains an entire list of all Schedule II-IV prescription drugs that have been prescribed to an individual patient. The report includes the name of the physician that prescribed the drug as well as the pharmacies where the patient obtained the drugs.[4] Similarly, in Texas, the Texas Prescription Program monitors Schedule II-IV prescription drugs from manufacture to end use. Like California's patient activity report, the TPP can be used to verify a physician's prescription record, generate prescription trends and inquire about patients.[5]