

Report in Brief

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



Why OIG Did This Audit

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), opioids were involved in more than 47,000 deaths in 2017, and opioid overdose deaths were 6 times higher in 2017 than in 1999. CDC has awarded funding to States to address the nonmedical use of prescription drugs and to address opioid overdoses. We are conducting a series of audits of States that have received CDC funding to enhance their prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs). We selected California for audit because it experienced a significant increase in the rate of drug overdose deaths during 2016 and 2017.

Our objectives were to (1) identify actions that California has taken, using Federal funds for improving PDMPs, to achieve program goals toward improving safe prescribing practices and preventing prescription drug abuse and misuse and (2) determine whether California complied with certain Federal requirements.

How OIG Did This Audit

We reviewed actions that California has taken to enhance and maximize its PDMP and that it proposed for CDC's "Prescription Drug Overdose: Prevention for States" grant for September 2015 through August 2018 (audit period). We examined California's status of completing 10 proposed activities and reviewed its documentation to determine whether it submitted reports in compliance with Federal requirements.

California Made Progress Toward Achieving Program Goals for Enhancing Its Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

What OIG Found

We identified actions that California has taken, using Federal funds for improving PDMPs, to achieve program goals toward improving safe prescribing practices and preventing prescription drug abuse and misuse. As of November 2018, California had completed most of the activities it proposed for the CDC grant to enhance and maximize its PDMP.

Specifically, of the 10 activities proposed for our audit period, California had completed 8 activities, such as notifying eligible providers of the new law requiring registration of the PDMP and promoting the PDMP's registration and use; providing technical assistance to selected county health departments, health insurers, and health systems serving high-burden regions and counties; conducting outreach to promote registration and use of the PDMP; providing training and support for using the PDMP database; and exploring the feasibility of law and policy changes to expand who can access PDMP data.

California had partially completed the remaining two activities, such as monitoring PDMP registration and usage patterns for continuous quality improvement. According to California, it completed these activities by the end of the project period (August 31, 2019).

California complied with Federal requirements for submitting its Federal Financial Report and Annual Performance Report and publicly reporting the five CDC-directed indicators (required for awardees using PDMPs for public health surveillance).

What OIG Recommends

This report contains no recommendations.