Prescription Drug Abuse in Kentucky

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Champions for a Drug-Free Carroll County
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The Cabinet

- In 1999 The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services was given the challenge to establish a program to fight the rising incidence of the diversion of legal prescription drugs into the illegal market.
- In response Kentucky implemented:
  - Controlled substance security prescription blanks, and
  - The Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting (KASPER) system.

Drug Enforcement Branch

- The Drug Enforcement and Professional Practices Branch is housed within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services:
  - Office of Inspector General (OIG),
    - Division of Audits and Investigations
- DEPPB Responsibilities:
  - Enforcement of Kentucky Controlled Substances Act (KRS 218).
    - Conducting drug investigations.
    - Licensing drug manufacturers and distributors.
  - Enforcement of Kentucky Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (KRS 217).
  - Operation of the KASPER program.

Controlled Substance Abuse and Diversion

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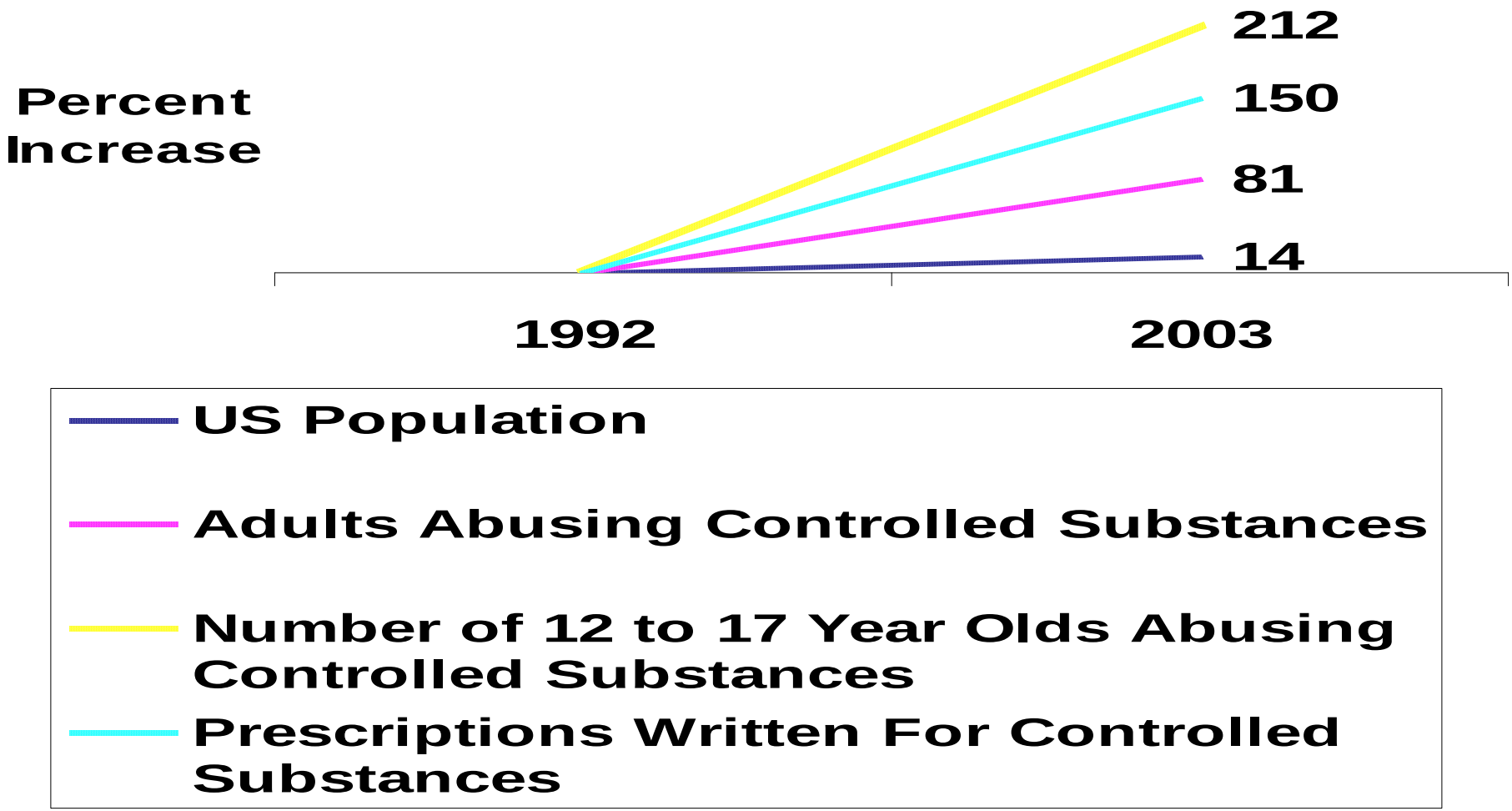
Misuse, Abuse, Diversion

- Misuse:
  - When a schedule II – V substance is taken by an individual for a non-medical reason.
- Abuse:
  - When an individual repeatedly takes a schedule II – V substance for a non-medical reason.
- Diversion:
  - When a schedule II – V substance is acquired and/or taken by an individual for whom the medication was not prescribed.

Controlled Substance Schedules

- Schedule I – Illegal Drugs
  - e.g. heroin, marijuana, etc.
- Schedule II – Most addictive legal drugs; high abuse potential
  - e.g. oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percocet, Tylox)
- Schedule III – Less abuse potential than I or II
  - e.g. hydrocodone combinations (Vicodin, Lortab).
- Schedule IV – Less abuse potential than III.
  - e.g. benzodiazepines (Xanax, Valium).
- Schedule V – least abuse potential
  - e.g. codeine containing cough mixtures.

The Scope of the Problem



Source: *Under the Counter: The Diversion and Abuse of Controlled Prescription Drugs in the U.S.* Published by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA), July 2005.

A National Perspective

From 1992 to 2003 the 15.1 million Americans abusing controlled prescription drugs exceeded the combined number abusing:

- Cocaine (5.9 million),
- Hallucinogens (4.0 million),
- Inhalants (2.1 million), and
- Heroin (.3 million).

Source: *Under the Counter: The Diversion and Abuse of Controlled Prescription Drugs in the U.S.* Published by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA), July 2005.

Controlled Substance Abuse in Kentucky

- 8.5% of Kentuckians used prescription psychotherapeutic drugs for nonmedical reasons in past year. (KY leads nation)
- 7% of Kentuckians have used prescription pain relievers such as Darvon and Percodan for nonmedical reasons in past year. (KY leads nation).
- 4.6% of Kentuckians have used prescription tranquilizers such as such as Valium and Xanax for nonmedical reasons in past year. (KY leads nation)
- 2.0% of Kentuckians have used prescription stimulants for nonmedical reasons in past year (KY fourth in nation)

Source: *Misuse of Prescription Drugs: Data from the 2002, 2003 and 2004 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*, published by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Office of Applied Studies, September 2006.

Generation Rx

- 19% of teens report abusing prescription medications to get high.
- 40% of teens agree that prescription medicines, even if not prescribed by a doctor, are safer than illegal drugs.
- 29% of teens believe prescription pain relievers are not addictive.
- 62% of teens say prescription pain relievers are easy to get from parents' medicine cabinets

Source: *2005 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study on Teen Drug Abuse*, The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, May 16, 2006.

The Medicine Cabinet!

Dear Annie: My husband and I recently purchased a nanny cam. However, instead of catching our nanny doing something wrong, we viewed a trusted neighbor taking our prescription pain medication. He has a key to our house and just let himself in.

What is the best way to handle this?

Annie's Mailbox (Kathy Mitchell, Marcy Sugar)

- December 3, 2008

Cough Syrup "Cocktails"

- Mixes of codeine-containing cough medicine with soft drinks or sports drinks. **
- Popularized in rap songs in the late 1990s. Known as "Lean", "Syrup", Sizzurp" or "Purple Drank". **
  - Users typically mix an ounce of the medicine with a sports drink, Sprite or Big Red, then plop in a Jolly Rancher candy and pour the mixture over ice.
- Louisville Metro Police Department reports drug abusers soaking marijuana cigarettes in prescription cough medicines.

** Reported by Donna Leinwand, USA Today, October 19, 2006

“Pharm Parties”

- Short for pharmaceutical party, a rapidly increasing problem with teens and young adults.
- Bowls and baggies of random prescription drugs called “trail mix”.
- Collecting pills from the family medicine cabinet called “pharming”.
- Internet chat rooms are used to share “recipes” for getting high with prescription drugs.
  - Users sometimes refer to pills by color rather than brand name, content or potency.

Reported by Donna Leinwand, USA Today, June 13, 2006

The Results of Rx Drug Abuse

- February 2006. Eddie Cappiello 22, died of drug overdose after a “pharm party” with the equivalent of 67 Xanax pills in his system, leaving behind a 6-week old daughter.

- June 2006. Justin Knox 22, bit down on Fentanyl patch and died before reaching the hospital.

Reported by Donna Leinwand, USA Today, June 13, 2006

The Results of Rx Drug Abuse

- September 2007 - Louisville. 2 Men arrested for shooting mother to death and critically wounding 2 year old daughter to obtain woman's Xanax (crime committed May 2006).

  - Louisville Courier-Journal, September 5, 2007

- February 2008 – New York. Actor Heath Ledger died from an accidental overdose of two strong painkillers (OxyContin and Vicodin), two anti-anxiety medicines (Valium and Xanax), and two sleeping aids.

  - Associated Press, February 7, 2008

The Economics of Drug Diversion

"Legal" Drugs Have Street Values

Generic Name	Brand Name	Brand Cost/ 100	Street Value Per 100
Acetaminophen w Codeine 30mg	Tylenol #3	$56.49	$800.00
Diazepam 10 mg	Valium 10 mg	$298.04	$1,000.00
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid 4 mg	$88.94	$10,000.00
Methylphenidate	Ritalin	$88.24	$1,500.00
Oxycodone	Oxycontin 80 mg	$1,081.36	$8,000.00
Cough Medicine w/Codeine **	Phenergan VC w/Codeine	$12.00/pint	$1,300.00/pint

Goldman, MD, Brian, "Unmasking the Illicit Drug Seeker"
** USA Today, October 19,2006

Law Enforcement Challenges

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Provider Shopping

Provider shopping is when controlled substances are acquired by deception.

Acts related to attempting to obtain a controlled substance, a prescription for a controlled substance or administration of a controlled substance, prohibited under KRS 218A.140 include:

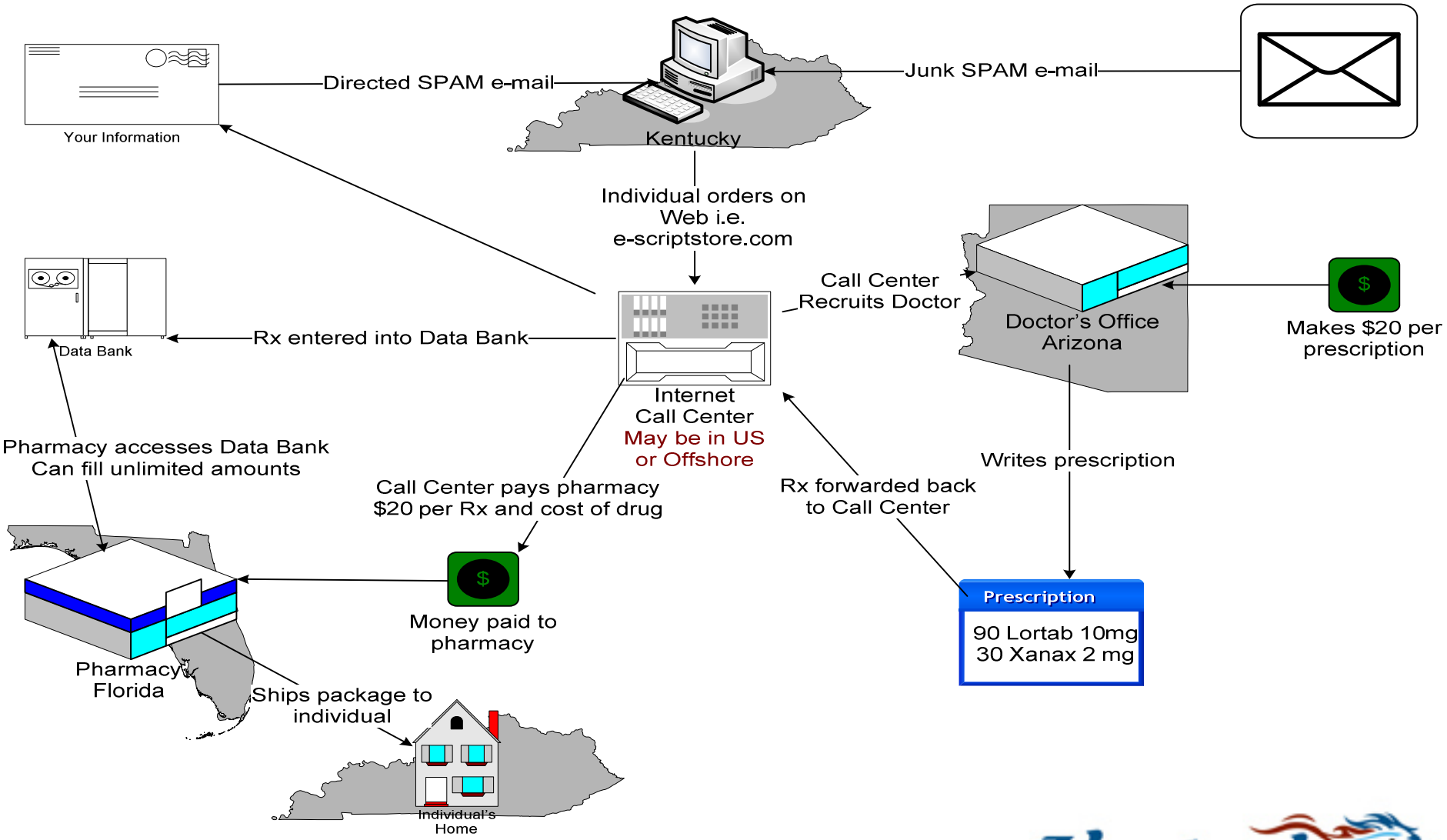
- Knowingly misrepresenting or withholding information from a practitioner.
- Providing a false name or address.
- Knowingly making a false statement.
- Falsely representing to be authorized to obtain controlled substances.
- Presenting a prescription that was obtained in violation of the above.
- Affixing a false or forged label to a controlled substance receptacle.

Provider Shopping

Targeted Provider Characteristics:

- New providers
- Senior providers
- Providers perceived to keep substandard records
- Pain management providers

Internet Pharmacies



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An Internet Pharmacy

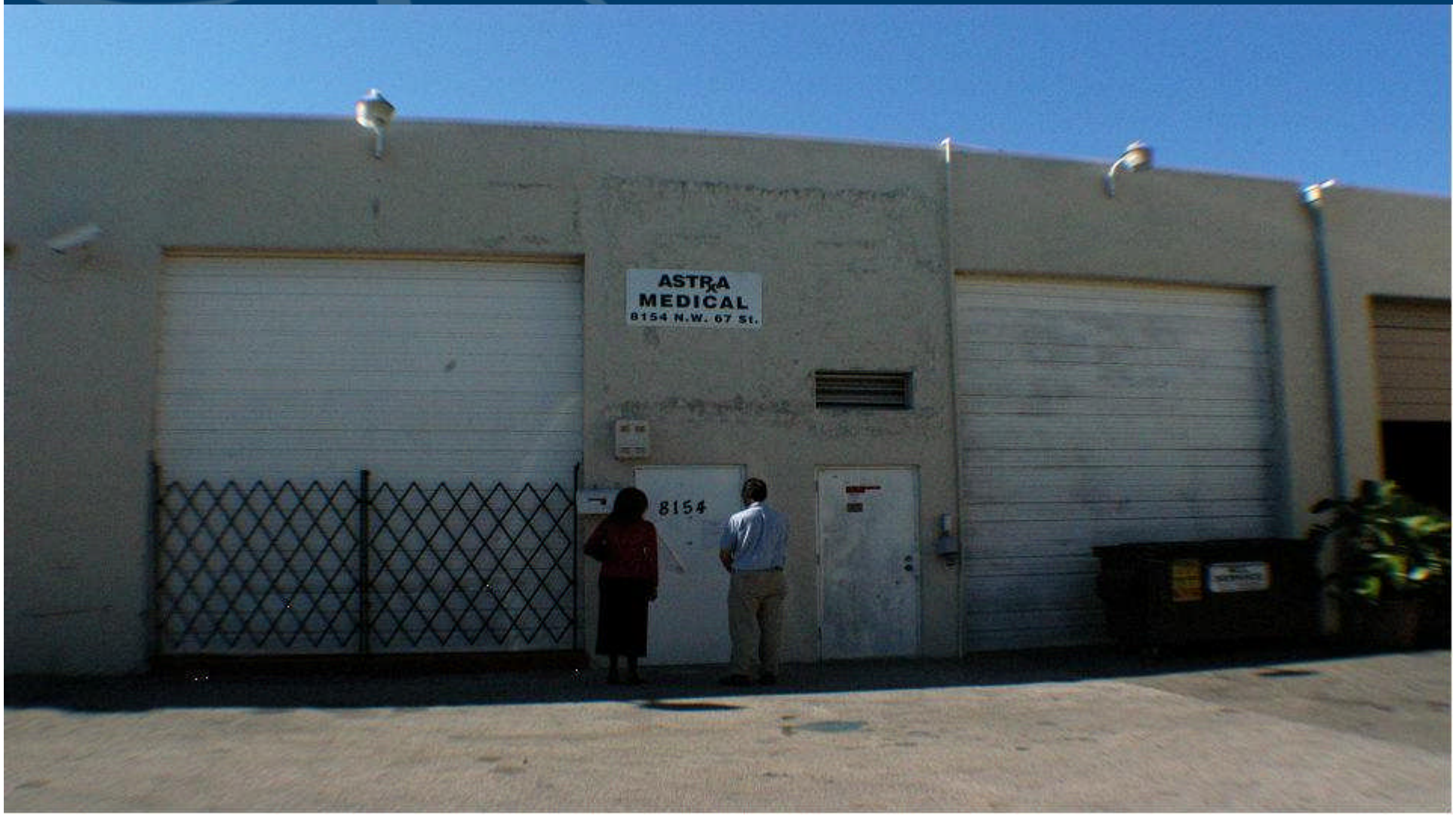

Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

An Internet Pharmacy

Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

Some Illegal Drugs of Abuse

- Cheese – Starter Heroin
  - Light tan colored powder with small granules
- Budder
  - Sticky yellow substance comprised of almost pure THC (resembling butter)
- Marijuana Gumballs
  - Yellow smiley faced gumballs filled with THC
- Chronic Candy
  - Lollipop containing hemp seed oil
- Methamphetamine (speed, chalk, ice, crystal, glass)
  - Strawberry Quick - Bright pink crystal resembling rock candy

The Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting Program

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What is KASPER?

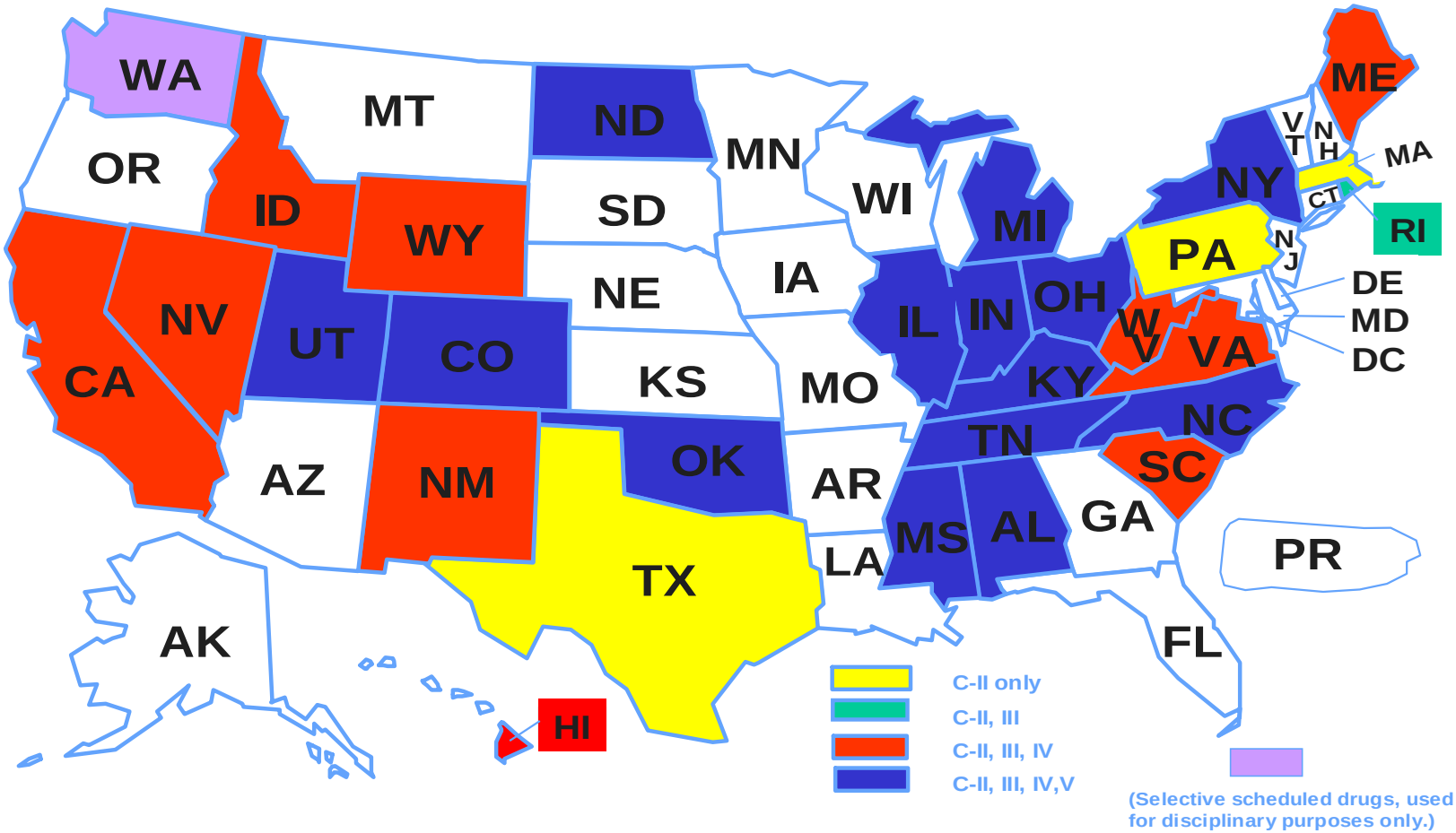
KASPER is Kentucky's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP). KASPER tracks Schedule II – V controlled substance prescriptions dispensed within the state as reported by pharmacies and other dispensers.

KASPER is a real-time Web-accessed database that provides a tool to help address one of the largest threats to patient safety in the Commonwealth of Kentucky; the misuse, abuse and diversion of controlled pharmaceutical substances.

The Need for KASPER

- Health care professionals need a tool to help identify patient prescription drug problems and when intervention may be needed.
- Diversion of controlled substances is reaching epidemic proportions.
  - Diverters cover large areas to obtain drugs.
  - Agencies need efficiency and value in their investigative tools.

States With Prescription Monitoring Programs



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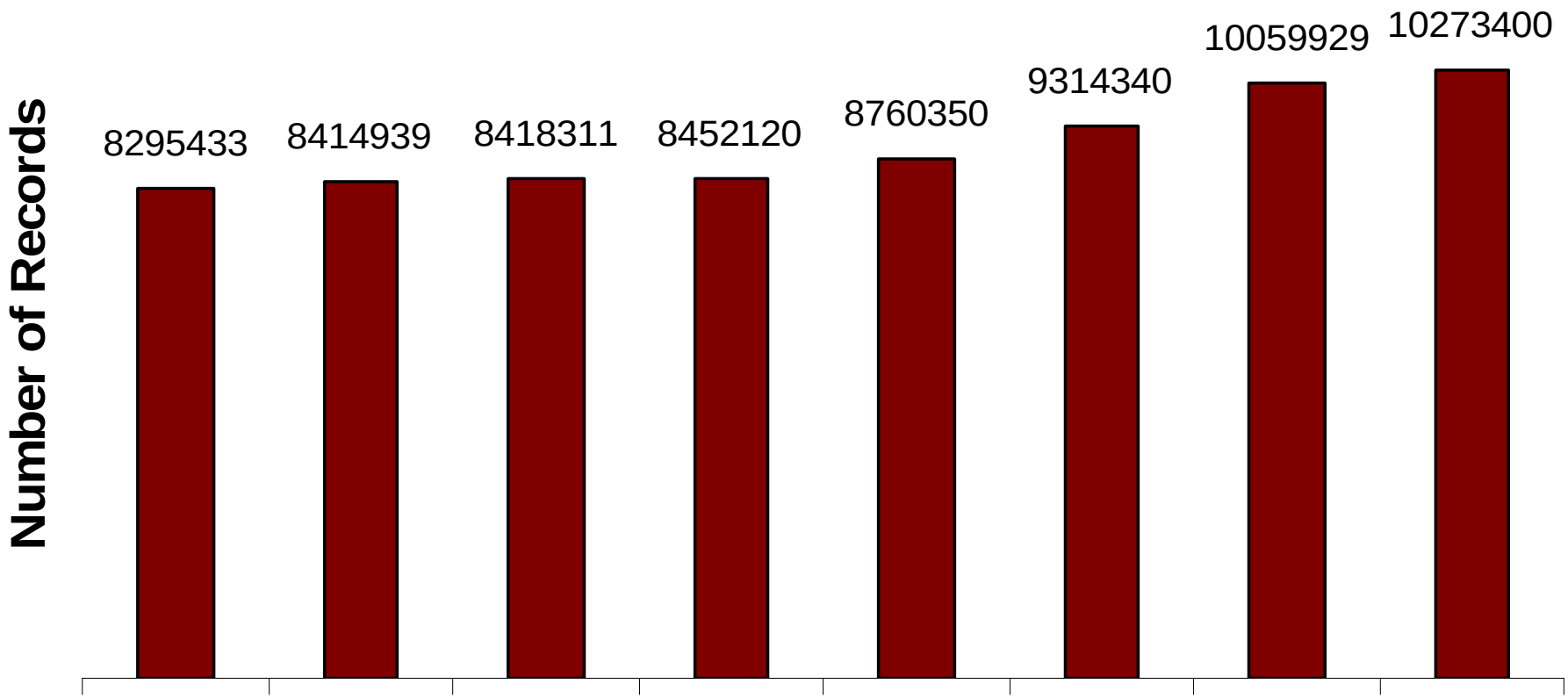
KASPER Operation

- KASPER tracks most Schedule II – V substances dispensed in KY.
  - Approximately 10 million controlled substance prescriptions reported to the system each year.
- KASPER data is 1 to 8 days old.
  - Dispensers have 8 days to report.
  - RelayHealth processes & provides data once per day.
- Reports available to authorized individuals.
  - Available via fax in 2-8 hours.
  - Available via Web often within 15 seconds (90% of requests).
  - Available 24/7 from any PC with Web access.

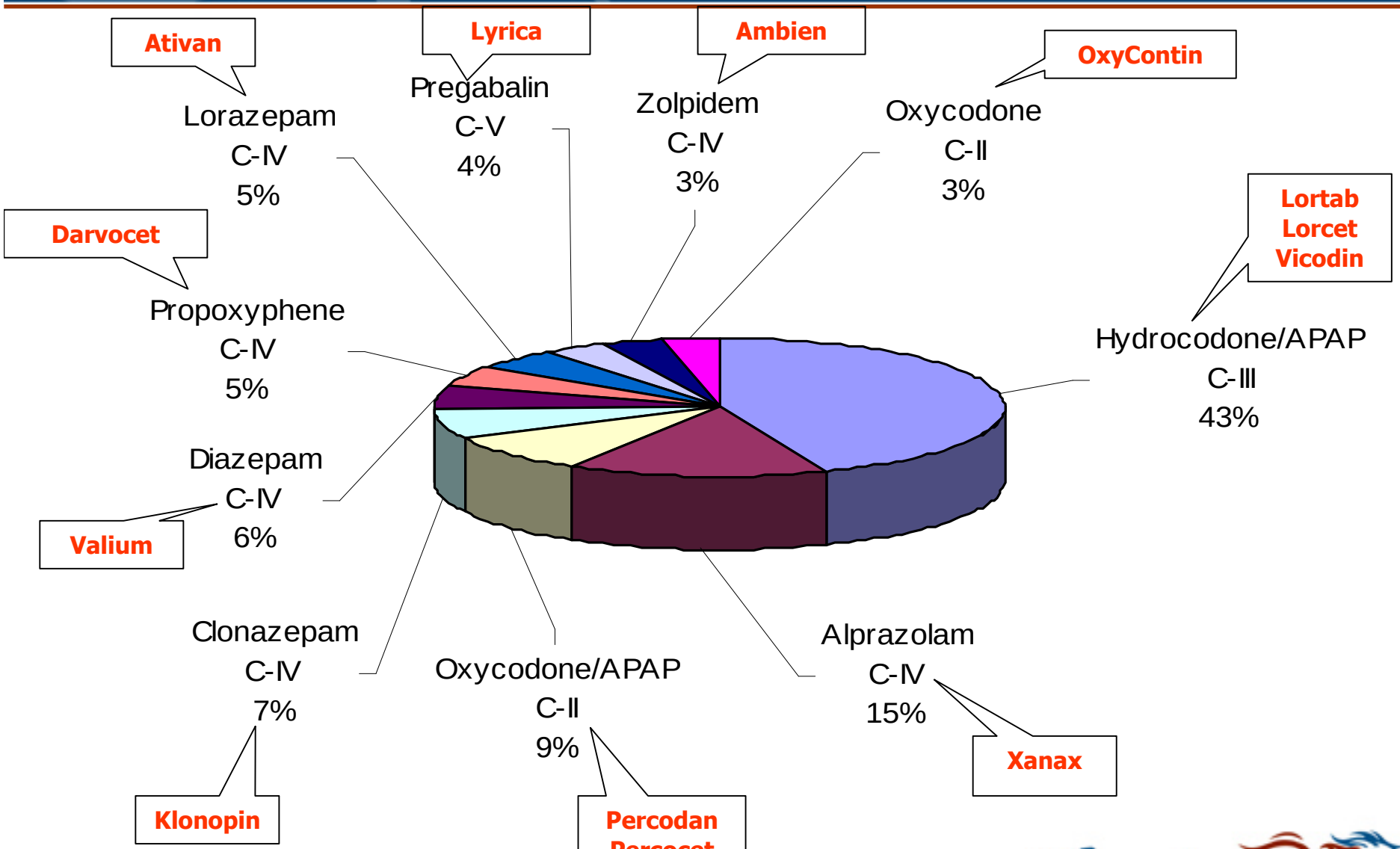
KASPER Records Total/Per Person 2001-2008



2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
2.04	**2.06**	**2.05**	**2.04**	**2.10**	**2.22**	**2.37**	**2.41**

Number of Controlled Substance Prescriptions Per Person

Top Prescribed Controlled Substances by Therapeutic Category by Doses - 2008



Cabinet for Health and Family Services

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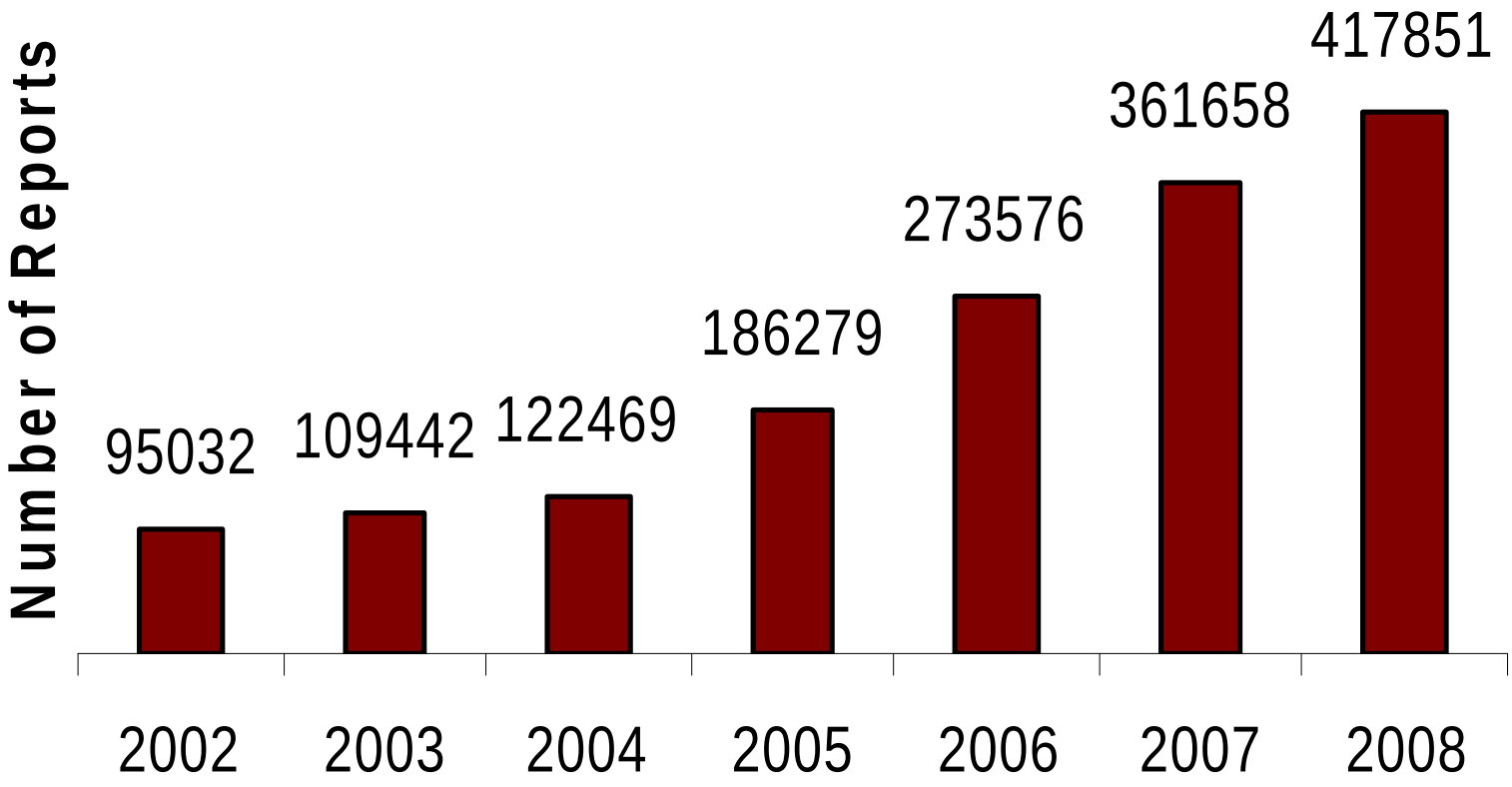
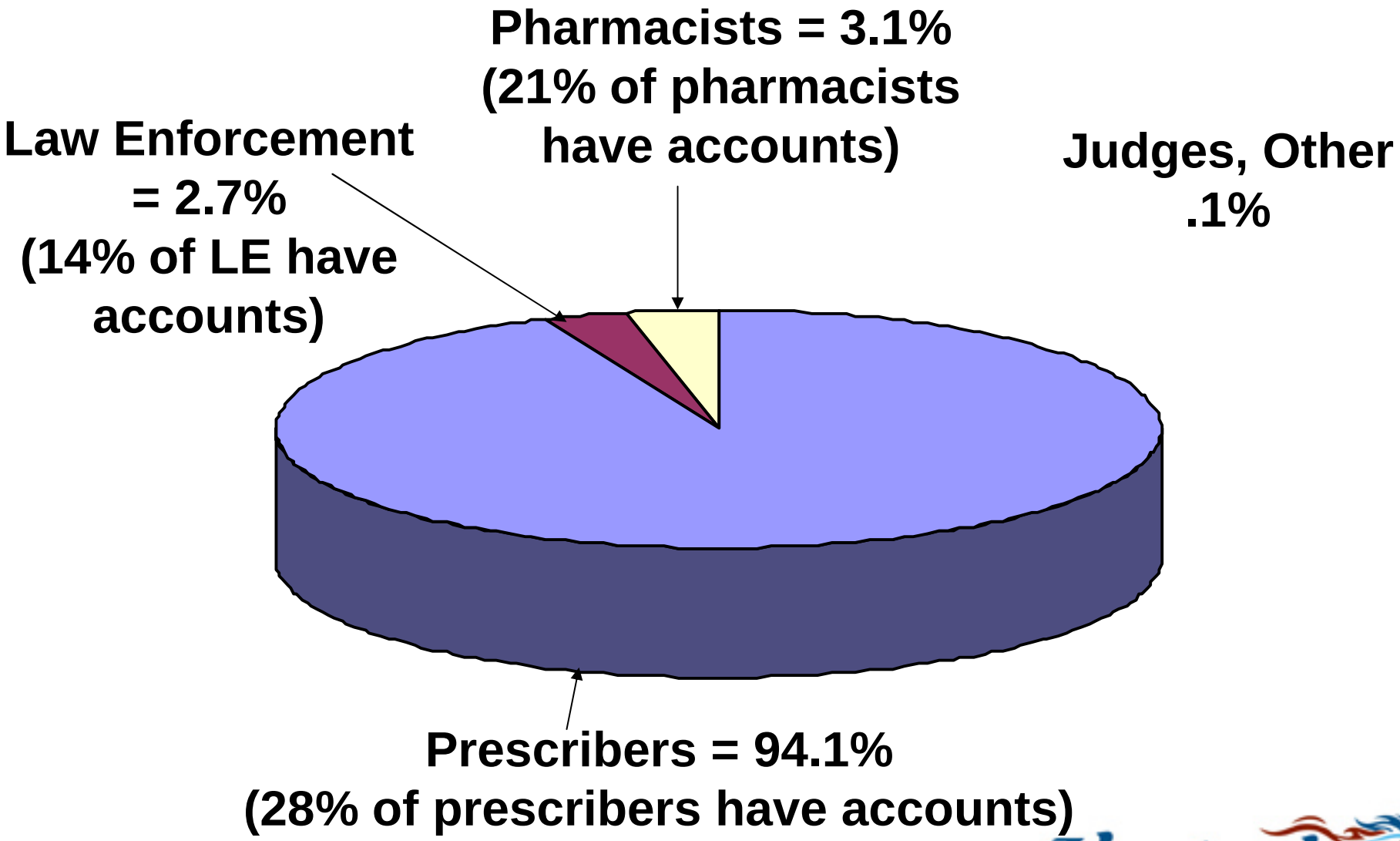
KASPER Stakeholders

- **Licensing Boards** – to investigate potential inappropriate prescribing by a licensee only.
- **Practitioners** and **Pharmacists** – to review a current patient's controlled substance prescription history for medical and/or pharmaceutical treatment.
- **Law Enforcement Officers** – to review an individual's controlled substance prescription history as part of a bona fide drug investigation – certified by investigator and supervisor.
- **Medicaid** – to screen recipients for potential abuse of pharmacy benefits and to determine "lock-in"; to screen providers for adherence to prescribing guidelines for Medicaid patients.
- **A judge or probation or parole officer** – to help ensure adherence to drug diversion or probation program guidelines.

KASPER Reports Requested / Year



KASPER Usage 2008



What does a KASPER Report Contain?

A KASPER report shows all controlled substance prescriptions an individual has had for a specified period of time, as well as the practitioner who prescribed them and the dispenser who dispensed them.

Goals of KASPER

- KASPER was designed as a tool to help address the problem with prescription drug abuse and diversion by providing:
  - A source of information for health care professionals.
  - An investigative tool for law enforcement.
- KASPER was not designed to:
  - Prevent people from getting prescription drugs.
  - Decrease the number of doses dispensed.

Intervention, Prevention and Treatment

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Danger Signs

- Slurred speech
- Staggering walk
- Dizzy
- Cold and clammy skin
- Confusion
- Nausea or vomiting
- Numbness of extremities
- Tired, nodding, passing out

Danger Signs Cont.

Danger signs of prescription or over-the-counter drug overdose are a lot like someone who is drunk. Don't be tempted to let someone "sleep it off". They could go to sleep, but never wake up.

Prescription Drug Identification

- Local pharmacist
- www.drugs.com
  - Select “Pill Identifier”
- www.rxlist.com
  - Select “Pill Identifier”
- www.drugid.info
  - Select “Click here” to see if we have your pill!

The Kentucky Region Poison Center recommends disposing of the drugs upon identification.

Information about Methamphetamine

www.methpedia.org

– Click on “Get Help Now”

Provides warning signs of methamphetamine use along with sources of information for parents and educators.

Emergency Contacts

- Substance Abuse Hotline:
  - (888) 729-8028

- Kentucky Region Poison Control Center:
  - (800) 222-1222
  - http://www.krpc.com/

Locating Treatment Resources

- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services – Addiction Services
  - http://mhmr.ky.gov/ProviderDirectory

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA), Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator:
  - http://dasis3.samhsa.gov

Adolescent Treatment Resources

Local Adolescent Substance Abuse Services

- NorthKey Community Care
  - 859-331-3292 or 877-331-3292 (toll free)
  - Peter White, Substance Abuse Services Director

Adolescent Treatment Resources

Residential Adolescent Substance Abuse Services

- Hillcrest Hall – Mt. Sterling
  - 859-498-6574 (Hotline)
- Lighthouse Adolescent Recovery Center – Louisville
  - 866-395-1680 (24 hour)
- Riverbend Treatment Center - Beattyville
  - 800-262-7491 (Hotline)

QUESTIONS?

Visit the KASPER Web Site: www.chfs.ky.gov/kasper

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