

Governments Influence on Controlled Medications

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In the past few years there have been many new regulations made regarding the prescribing of a controlled substance. Medical providers are mandated to follow strict policy and procedures to ensure that they and their patients comply or have a fear of losing their DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) license causing them to no longer be able to prescribe these medications. There are providers and patients both that think the government is too involved when it comes to prescribing these types of medications. The providers argue that they should have the right with their medical judgement to decide what and how much of a drug a patient needs and for how long they will need it. There are also patients who feel they are now no longer able to get the treatment they need for pain because of the restrictions and pressure the government has put on the providers. The government should take a step back and let the medical professionals be able to care for their patients in a way they deem the best practice of care in each situation.

Controlled substances are drugs that are regulated by state and federal laws which aim to control the danger of addiction, abuse, physical and mental harm, and illegal trafficking. Such types of medications include those that are used for chronic pain, severe anxiety, and insomnia. The medications have been put into different classifications according to their potential of abuse and harm they may cause.

These classes have been determined in accordance to the Controlled Substance Act (CSA) that was put in place in 1970 and adjust on a regular basis as the medications and their use changes. [CITATION USL16 \l 1033]

Providers see between 15-25 patients a day depending on their practice, and possibly more when working in walk in care or emergency situations. All providers want to make their patients as comfortable as possible, some situations call for them to prescribe one of these controlled substances. There have always been federal guidelines that a provider needed but now they are requiring the providers to do drug testing, contracts, random pills count, and visits every three months or less depending on the medication. The government is even monitoring the dosage of medication that a provider can give to a patient. These decisions should be left up to the provider, they are the ones who know the patients best and are aware of the people who should be monitored more. With the regulations the way that they are now 65-year-old women comes in complaining of back pain and a provider is nervous to give her anything for fear that something will happen the person will not be in federal compliance therefor making a ding on that providers DEA license. In order to prescribe any medications a provider needs to have a DEA license so the fear of losing that is a large threat for them, it could potentially put them out of practice.

When you are talking about controlled medications you must remember that it is done a federal level but also on a state by state law as well. For example, in some state's marijuana is legal but on a federal level it is not, providers also must keep this in mind. A provider working at a federally funded facility in the states of Maine is still to has to follow the federal regulations in order to be complaint, one of those regranutations stating the patient is not allowed marijuana to show on a drug screen. The reason for this is the facility is getting its funding from the federal government which require them to keep up their standards and qualifications as well.

With the rise in substance abuse I fully understand why there needs to be laws put in place regarding regulating the medications. In the states of Maine, the number of overdose deaths are rising, doubling since 2012. These types of addictions can also have severe side effects one of them being Depression. The state data shows that more suicides are more prevalent in Maine than homicides. It has also been noted that the suicide rate is steadily increasing. [CITATION The181 \l 1033] With all these things in mind should the government be the one in control of the medications and how they are prescribed? With them being in charge, my concern is that people are now not getting the proper to treatments due to a fear of “punishment”, causing patients to suffer when they truly do need these medications to improve quality of life.

I feel that the power over the amount, to who, why, and when should be left up to the medical professionals. What the government should be concerning themselves with is the punishments for the people who are caught in position of drugs.

Currently a drug possession charge in the state of Maine can range any where’s from a misdemeanor with only a fine or a felony with a possible sentence of to 10 years in prison.[CITATION Luk18 \l 1033] If the law was changed and make this charge the same no matter amount or type of controlled substance, then people would be less likely to take a risk at being caught. The law makers need to stop making it easy for the people to who are caught with small amounts, these are the ones that become repeat offenders. They are also the people that are aware of the laws and how much they can be caught with in order to do the least amount of time or lowest fine.

Leave the medications to the medical professionals, they know what is right for their patients. The government needs to focus their power on the laws that surround the offender and make it more difficult for them to get away with these crimes. People tend to only focus on the harm that these medications can do for those with addiction issues and forget about the good they able to do regarding others quality of life.

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