



**U. S. Department of Justice**  
**Drug Enforcement Administration**

Milwaukee District Office  
4724 West Electric Avenue  
West Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53219

[www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov)

September 25, 2018

Michael J. Murphy  
Alderman, 10th District  
City Hall, Room 205  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Opioid Prescriptions and Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

Dear Alderman Murphy,

I am in receipt of your letter dated August 27, 2018, in which you requested information on the efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) related to clinics and physicians who overprescribe or illegally prescribe opioids. You also requested information related to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) and its effectiveness in combatting the opioid epidemic.

The DEA is committed to working with local, state and federal agencies who have oversight and/or investigative responsibility over the prescription of controlled substances. The DEA Diversion Control Division has the responsibility to issue registrations to businesses that import, export, manufacture, and distribute controlled substances. The DEA also issues registrations to all health professionals licensed to dispense, administer or prescribe controlled substances. The DEA Diversion Control Division's mission is to prevent, detect and investigate the diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances and listed chemicals from legitimate channels, while ensuring an adequate and uninterrupted supply of pharmaceutical controlled substances and listed chemicals to meet legitimate medical, commercial and scientific needs.

The DEA investigates physicians who sell prescriptions for which there is no medical need; pharmacists who falsify records, divert and subsequently sell controlled substances for personal gain; employees who steal from drug inventories and falsify orders to cover their illicit behavior; and individuals who forge prescriptions to illegally obtain controlled substances.

The DEA investigates clinics and physicians who overprescribe or illegally prescribe opioids or other controlled substances. This includes the use of administrative, civil and/or criminal actions against registrants. For example, in June 2018, Clinical Pain Consultants owners Lisa Hofschulz and Robert Hofschulz were federally charged in the Eastern District of Wisconsin for conspiring to distribute controlled substances to individuals who did not have a legitimate medical need.

The DEA does, at times, utilize the PDMP in the course of our investigations. This critical tool is important to evaluate if DEA registrants are potentially engaged in the inappropriate prescribing of controlled substances. Our office works collaborate investigations with numerous federal, state and

local agencies on these critical investigations to ensure that DEA registrants who are prescribing outside of the normal course of their training are properly investigated.

Beginning April 1, 2017, the Wisconsin State Legislature under the Controlled Substance Board (CSB) statute requires prescribers to review patient PDMP records prior to issuing most controlled substance to their patients. If a practitioner violates this statute the CSB may refer a practitioner to the appropriate licensing or regulatory board for discipline. The PDMP is a state run program in which the DEA does not have administrative oversight.

The CSB reported that from third quarter 2015 through second quarter 2018, there has been a 32% decrease in opioid dispensing in Milwaukee, WI. The CSB reported for the State of Wisconsin there has been a 27% decrease in opioid dispensing. These statistics are a positive indicator that education and oversight, partnered with law enforcement, can curb the amount of opioids dispensed in our communities.

I look forward to assisting your office in the fight against the current opioid epidemic, which has caused much destruction in Milwaukee and throughout the United States. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Maxwell", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Paul E. Maxwell, Jr.  
Assistant Special Agent in Charge  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Milwaukee District Office