



**For Immediate Release**

Grant Miller, PIO 614-705-1190

[Media.Relations@pharmacy.ohio.gov](mailto:Media.Relations@pharmacy.ohio.gov)

**Board of Pharmacy Announces Upgrade to State's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program  
*Ohio Leads Nation in Implementing Analytics Software Aimed at Reducing Prescription Drug Abuse***

October 19, 2017 – Columbus, Ohio – Ohio is deploying a new tool in its fight against prescription drug abuse. The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy announced an upgrade to Ohio's prescription drug monitoring program, known as the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS), that will provide Ohio prescribers and pharmacists with advanced analytics and tools to promote patient safety and assist in clinical decision-making.

"Through this upgrade, Ohio becomes the first state in the nation to offer this powerful analytics tool statewide," said State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy Executive Director Steven W. Schierholt. "This is another step in our commitment to utilize data in OARRS to better inform patient care."

The upgrade to OARRS, utilizing Appriss Health's NarxCare® platform, offers several key features, including scores that calculate a patient's possible risk of overdose and addiction, red flags to alert prescribers of a potential patient safety issue, interactive visualization of prescription data, a messaging option to communicate with other healthcare providers and the ability to search for local addiction treatment providers. The new platform will be made available at no cost to all Ohio healthcare providers accessing OARRS via electronic health records and through the OARRS website on November 20, 2017.

"Ohio has been a national leader in tracking the dispensing of prescription drugs to patients," said Ohio Department of Medicaid Medical Director Dr. Mary Applegate. "This upgraded drug monitoring platform will offer critical information to Ohio clinicians to help them provide better and safer treatment for their patients."

Established in 2006, OARRS is a statewide database that collects information on all prescriptions for controlled substances that are dispensed by pharmacies or furnished by prescribers in Ohio. OARRS is designed to monitor this information for suspected abuse or diversion and can provide a prescriber or pharmacist critical information regarding a patient's controlled substance prescription history. For more information on OARRS, please visit: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/oarrs](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/oarrs).

Under the Kasich Administration, Ohio has been strengthening its prescription drug monitoring program to give prescribers and pharmacists greater ability to prevent opiate abuse. As a result, doctor shopping – where individuals see multiple prescribers to obtain controlled substances illicitly – has decreased substantially and the total number of opiates dispensed to patients is down 20 percent over a four-year period.

Implementation of the upgrade is supported by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). For more information on NarxCare®, please visit: <https://apprisshealth.com/solutions/narxcare/>

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77 South High Street, 17th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215

