

DATA BRIEF

[MARCH, 2016]

DATA BRIEF SUMMARY

EPCS is one of the most promising technologies available to address the national opioid epidemic. By the end of 2015 over 80% of retail pharmacies were enabled to receive electronic prescriptions for controlled substances. But the enablement rate for prescribers to send prescriptions for opioids remained low, averaging 10% nationwide over the same period. The average national use rate, which is dependent on adoption by both pharmacies and prescribers, was 5.5%. Across the states, there is a broad range in the rates of adoption and use by prescribers. One promising indicator is that states where prescribers have adopted the technology at higher rates are also seeing significant growth in EPCS use.

PRESCRIBER AND PHARMACY ADOPTION OF ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (EPCS): NATIONAL AND STATE DATA

BACKGROUND

As the volume of prescriptions for opioids has exploded over the past decade, so has the incidence of overdose and death from misuse of those powerful drugs. Over the past five years, pharmacy and law enforcement regulators have collaborated to legalize electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS), and by 2015 that goal was achieved in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. EPCS is widely expected to improve accountability and reduce the incidence of illegal diversion through forged and counterfeit paper and telephoned prescriptions.

This Data Brief tracks the growth of EPCS nationwide and in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia over the past year. Future Data Briefs will be issued quarterly and will report on progress over the coming year.

HOW WE MEASURE PROGRESS

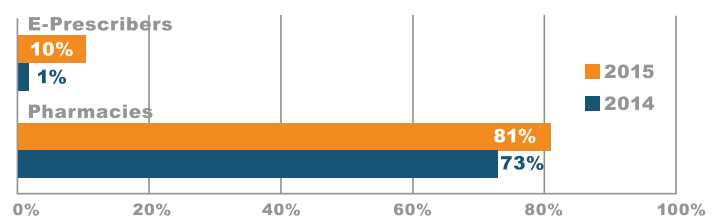
Surescripts has developed three metrics to track EPCS enablement and use at the national and state levels.* Collectively they measure the ability of an e-prescriber and pharmacy to send and receive EPCS.

1. **Pharmacy Enablement**—the percentage of retail pharmacies enabled for EPCS.
2. **Prescriber Enablement**—the percentage of active e-prescribers enabled for EPCS.
3. **EPCS Use**—the percentage of active e-prescribers who have actually sent a prescription for a controlled substance to an EPCS-enabled pharmacy using their EHR software application via the Surescripts network.

NATIONWIDE GROWTH OF EPCS IN 2015

EPCS use increased in 2015, although it remained relatively low, averaging 5.5% across all e-prescribers. Most retail pharmacies (81%) were prepared to receive digital prescription orders for controlled substances, but only 10% of prescribers were prepared to send them. EPCS use is contingent upon both pharmacy and prescriber enablement, and consequently will grow only as prescriber enablement rates increase.

Percentage of E-Prescribers & Pharmacies Enabled for EPCS
2014 and 2015

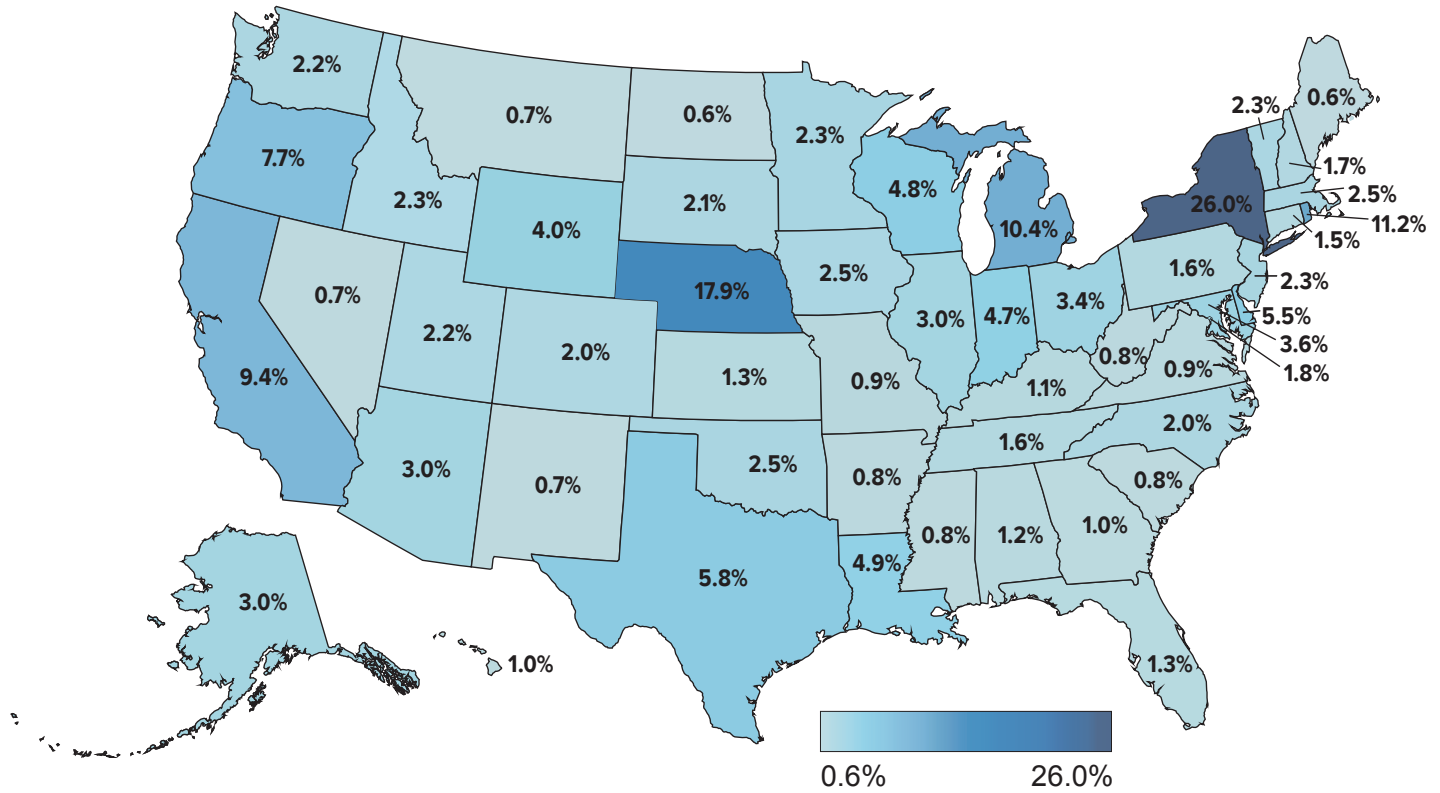


Between 2014 and 2015, prescriber enablement increased significantly from 1% to 10%. We expect growth to accelerate in the coming year as more prescribers complete the process of meeting Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) requirements for EPCS** and more EHR vendors develop technology solutions consistent with those requirements.

EPCS ENABLEMENT AND USE BY STATE IN 2015

STATE	% OF RETAIL PHARMACIES ENABLED FOR EPCS	% OF ACTIVE E-PRESCRIBERS ENABLED FOR EPCS	EPCS USE RATE
ALABAMA	72.1%	3.0%	1.2%
ALASKA	79.0%	5.3%	3.0%
ARIZONA	89.2%	6.1%	3.0%
ARKANSAS	72.2%	1.9%	0.8%
CALIFORNIA	74.5%	16.8%	9.4%
COLORADO	87.3%	4.1%	2.0%
CONNECTICUT	88.3%	2.2%	1.5%
DELAWARE	89.7%	10.4%	5.5%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	78.2%	2.9%	1.8%
FLORIDA	73.9%	3.5%	1.3%
GEORGIA	77.9%	2.0%	1.0%
HAWAII	63.0%	1.8%	1.0%
IDAHO	81.0%	3.3%	2.3%
ILLINOIS	82.5%	4.9%	3.0%
INDIANA	91.1%	8.2%	4.7%
IOWA	84.9%	5.1%	2.5%
KANSAS	85.6%	3.2%	1.3%
KENTUCKY	72.5%	2.1%	1.1%
LOUISIANA	80.7%	6.7%	4.9%
MAINE	88.2%	1.1%	0.6%
MARYLAND	83.7%	5.7%	3.6%
MASSACHUSETTS	91.0%	7.3%	2.5%
MICHIGAN	89.4%	17.1%	10.4%
MINNESOTA	74.9%	4.7%	2.3%
MISSISSIPPI	68.7%	1.4%	0.8%
MISSOURI	85.4%	3.0%	0.9%
MONTANA	73.2%	2.7%	0.7%
NEBRASKA	81.9%	25.9%	17.9%
NEVADA	85.3%	3.4%	0.7%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	91.8%	2.5%	1.7%
NEW JERSEY	81.5%	3.9%	2.3%
NEW MEXICO	87.6%	1.5%	0.7%
NEW YORK	93.1%	46.6%	26.0%
NORTH CAROLINA	84.5%	5.8%	2.0%
NORTH DAKOTA	76.7%	0.8%	0.6%
OHIO	84.9%	6.0%	3.4%
OKLAHOMA	88.7%	4.4%	2.5%
OREGON	86.3%	18.5%	7.7%
PENNSYLVANIA	78.9%	2.7%	1.6%
RHODE ISLAND	94.7%	22.1%	11.2%
SOUTH CAROLINA	80.2%	1.3%	0.8%
SOUTH DAKOTA	75.7%	2.3%	2.1%
TENNESSEE	78.4%	3.5%	1.6%
TEXAS	85.5%	9.5%	5.8%
UTAH	76.0%	4.7%	2.2%
VERMONT	84.6%	3.2%	2.3%
VIRGINIA	85.0%	1.7%	0.9%
WASHINGTON	74.5%	3.6%	2.2%
WEST VIRGINIA	76.4%	2.3%	0.8%
WISCONSIN	84.0%	7.5%	4.8%
WYOMING	82.0%	5.9%	4.0%
NATIONAL	80.6%	10.0%	5.5%

RATE OF EPCS USE IN 2015



EPCS TRENDS

TOP TEN STATES

Among the top 10 states ranked by prescriber enablement, seven states were at or above the national average of 10%: New York, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Oregon, Michigan, California, and Delaware.

Of those seven states, five states also appeared on the top ten list in 2014: Nebraska, Rhode Island, Michigan, California, and Delaware.

Three states were below the national average of 10%: Texas, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

	PRESCRIBER ENABLEMENT RATE	PHARMACY ENABLEMENT RATE	EPCS USE RATE
New York*	47%	93%	26%
Nebraska	26%	82%	18%
Rhode Island	22%	95%	11%
Oregon*	19%	86%	8%
Michigan	17%	89%	10%
California	17%	74%	9%
Delaware	10%	90%	5%
Texas*	9%	85%	6%
Indiana*	8%	91%	5%
Wisconsin*	7%	84%	5%
All States	10%	81%	6%

* State is new to the Top Ten List in 2015

FORMULA FOR METRICS*

METRIC	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR
PHARMACY ENABLEMENT RATE: <i>% of Retail Pharmacies Enabled for EPCS</i>	Retail pharmacies certified and ready to receive EPCS transactions from prescribers	Total number of retail pharmacies in the country based on National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) data
PRESCRIBER ENABLEMENT RATE: <i>% of Active E-Prescribers Enabled for EPCS</i>	Prescribers who use an EHR software that is EPCS certified and audit approved <i>NOTE: These prescribers may not yet be sending EPCS transactions, but have sent an e-prescription in the past 30 days</i>	Total number of prescribers who have sent e-prescriptions to pharmacies in the last 30 days using their EHR software applications via the Surescripts network
EPCS USE RATE: <i>% of Active Prescribers Active on EPCS</i>	Prescribers who use an EHR software that is EPCS certified and audit approved and have sent an EPCS transaction in the last 30 days	Total number of prescribers who have sent e-prescriptions to pharmacies in the last 30 days using their EHR software application via the Surescripts network

DEA REQUIREMENTS**

Before an e-prescriber is able to use EPCS, the DEA requires the following:

- Audit or Certification Report that the EPCS application meets all of the federal requirements
- Identity Proofing of the Prescriber via Two Factor Authentication
- Authorized Access Controls only for individuals legally authorized to sign controlled substance prescriptions

About Surescripts

Surescripts operates the only health information network to connect the diverse and expansive community of care partners nationwide, including pharmacies, providers, benefit managers, and health information exchanges. Surescripts is leading the way for a more connected and collaborative healthcare system with a technology neutral platform that exchanges vast amounts of data across a disparate range of health technology systems in use today. For more information, go to www.surescripts.com and follow us at twitter.com/surescripts.