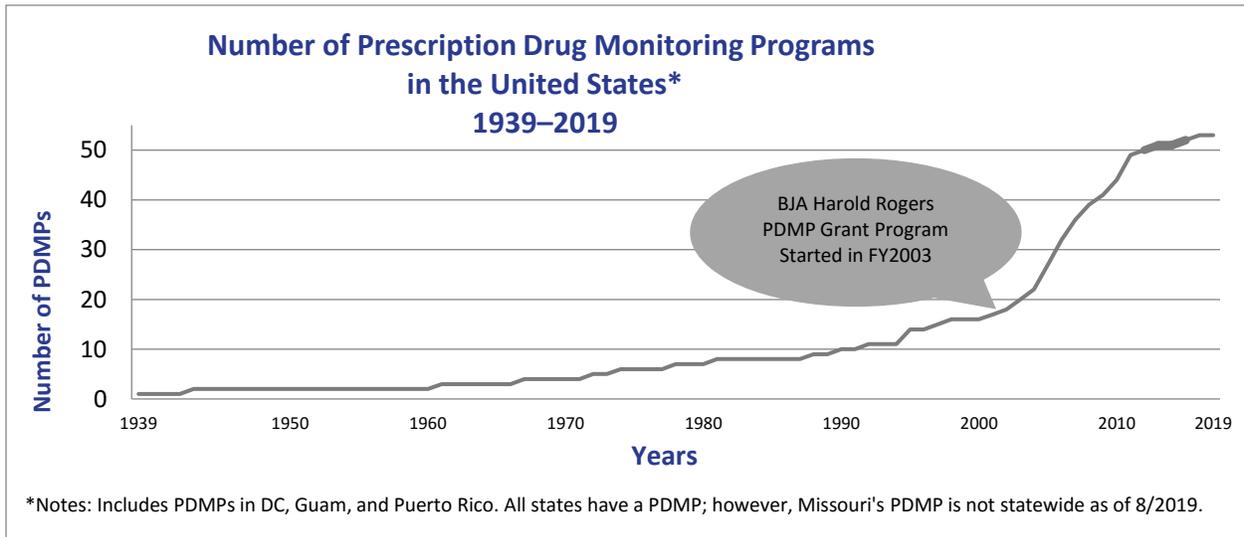


**International Overdose Awareness Day**  
**“Time to Remember, Time to Act”**

**PDMPs in the Race to Prevent Drug Overdoses**

International Overdose Awareness Day, held annually on August 31, is dedicated to remembering people who have been affected by drug overdoses.<sup>1</sup> It is also held to honor them by reducing the stigma of a drug-related death and spreading the message that overdose deaths are preventable. Communities around the globe mobilize to conduct vigils, conferences, workshops, and outreach events with stakeholders and the general public about the complex and interwoven issues surrounding substance abuse and dependence. A silver badge worn by individuals displays their support for overdose awareness.

As part of a comprehensive strategy to address prescription drug abuse and related overdoses in the United States, the Bureau of Justice Assistance has been administering Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) grants to enhance the utilization and effectiveness of these data information systems since 2003.<sup>2</sup>



PDMPs are overseen by a state or local government that contains information on dispensed controlled substance prescription drugs.<sup>3</sup> Currently, there are 53 operational PDMPs in the United States and territories. While there are unique features across these information systems, the basic characteristics are consistent and driven by a common goal: to serve as tools for public

<sup>1</sup> August 31 is the dedicated unofficial day of observance. For more information, please visit <https://www.overdoseday.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the BJA grant programs, please visit [www.bja.gov](http://www.bja.gov).

<sup>3</sup> For more information about PDMPs, please visit [www.coapresources.org](http://www.coapresources.org).

safety and public health. Below are a few examples of how state PDMPs are involved in the overall efforts to address and prevent drug overdoses.

### **Pre-Criminal Investigation Program (PCIP)**

The PDMPs in Nevada and Ohio use a data-driven intervention program, a PCIP, to identify and help individuals exhibiting doctor- or pharmacy-shopping behavior receive substance abuse treatment, regain stability in their lives, and avoid being arrested. The PCIPs leverage state laws and utilize PDMP data to serve three essential functions: (1) identify individuals in need of intervention; (2) induce enrollment into the program; and (3) monitor program participants' purchases of prescription drugs, a key indicator of behavior change and treatment compliance. Findings from the five-year follow-up of the Nevada program indicate that a high proportion (about 75 percent) of the participants remained compliant with their intervention agreements.

### **Proactive Information Dissemination and Education**

Currently, 36 state PDMPs proactively provide some level of information to health care practitioners to improve medication safety for their patients, thereby decreasing the risk of unintentional overdoses. For example, the Utah PDMP offers practitioners enhanced data system with data visualization and risk-assessment components aimed to better inform clinical decision making. The Arkansas PDMP analyzes data to conduct academic detailing, a peer-to-peer educational outreach, with health care providers and to conduct a public education and awareness campaign, "Dose of Reality," in targeted communities.

### **Overdose Fatality Reviews**

In Maryland, an assembled team consisting of stakeholders from multiple agencies conducts confidential case reviews of overdose deaths. The case reviews include information from the PDMP that provides a comprehensive history of controlled substance prescription medications dispensed to individuals prior to their fatal drug overdoses. Such information from the PDMP enables more effective outreach, education, and other data-driven strategies to both health care practitioners and patients to prevent future similar deaths.

For more information about PDMPs and the staff members who work tirelessly to identify and implement effective solutions in the race to prevent drug overdoses, please visit [www.coapresources.org](http://www.coapresources.org).