

What is the interactive online Part D Opioid Mapping Tool?

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released an interactive online mapping tool which shows geographic comparisons, at the state, county, and ZIP-code levels, of de-identified Medicare Part D opioid prescriptions filled within the United States. This mapping tool allows the user to see both the number and percentage of opioid claims at the local level and better understand how this critical issue impacts communities nationwide.

What is CMS doing to address opioid overutilization in the Medicare Part D program?

Prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing problem nationwide. CMS is committed to protecting Medicare beneficiaries and the Medicare Trust fund from the harm and damaging effects associated with prescription drug abuse.

The Medicare Part D Overutilization Monitoring System (OMS) helps CMS ensure that Part D plan sponsors have established reasonable and appropriate drug utilization management programs to assist in preventing overutilization of prescribed medications. For more information on the Part D OMS, go to <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovContra/RxUtilization.html>.

What is the population included in the Opioid Mapping Tool?

The Opioid Mapping Tool is based on data in the [Part D Prescriber PUF](#), which includes data for providers that had a valid NPI and were identified on Medicare Part D prescription drug events submitted by plans for the benefit year. The data reflect prescribing to beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part D, who comprise approximately 70% of the total Medicare population. The data are de-identified to protect beneficiary privacy.

This data in the Opioid Mapping Tool only represent the physician's Medicare patients – does this mean the tool presents an incomplete picture of their entire practice?

Yes. The data reflect Medicare Part D prescription drug claims prescribed by health care providers. Approximately 70% of Medicare beneficiaries have Medicare prescription drug coverage either from a Part D plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan offering Medicare prescription drug coverage. It does not include prescribing for patients on Medicaid, those with commercial insurance, or self-pay patients.

As a result, users of this data should recognize that it only presents a portion of a physician's entire practice and that portion can vary significantly across physicians. However, this data does present valuable information on how physicians prescribe within in the Medicare program.

Does the Opioid Mapping Tool contain information for beneficiaries in Medicare Advantage?

Yes. The Opioid Mapping Tool is based on data available in the Part D Prescriber PUF, which was developed using claims from beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plans and stand-alone Prescription Drug plans. The file does not include claims from commercial payers or Medicaid.

Are methadone claims included in the Part D Opioid Mapping tool drug data?

The data for this tool were derived from the public Part D Prescriber public use files. The analyses are based on the products included in the CMS Overutilization Monitoring System, and it does include methadone.

What does it mean that my state has a higher or lower number/percentage of opioid prescriptions when compared to other states?

When a state has a higher percentage than another state or the national average, that means the relative proportion of Medicare opioid prescription claims prescribed in that state is higher, based on prescribers who practice in the state. The web tool also provides the percentage at the county and ZIP-code level which allows users to compare percentages in their specific communities.

Why do the totals from the ZIP-code and county level data not add up to the state or national totals?

The data that are included in the mapping tool must be granular enough to provide county and ZIP-code level rates and thus data are redacted as necessary (i.e., any data point based on 10 or fewer claims is removed) to protect beneficiary privacy. Due to these necessary redactions, the totals summarized from small geographic levels will be lower than the true program totals.

What are you doing to protect beneficiary privacy in the Opioid Mapping Tool?

CMS is committed to protecting the privacy of Medicare beneficiaries. The Opioid Mapping Tool is based on data available in the Part D Prescriber PUF. In order to prevent potential re-identification and protect beneficiary privacy, we have redacted any data lines in the Part D Prescriber PUF data file that were based on information from 10 or fewer individual claims.

Are consumers' clinical data subject to privacy and security protections in the Part D Opioid Drug Mapping tool?

The data used in the Opioid Mapping tool are de-identified to protect beneficiary privacy. Also, there is no beneficiary information contained in the mapping tool or the underlying data set.