



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH  
SECRETARY

August 31, 2018

**SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

The Honorable Josh Dobson, Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Health and Human Services  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 301N, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Louis Pate, Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Health and Human Services  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 311, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Donny Lambeth, Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Health and Human Services  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 303, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Chairmen:

Session Law 2015-241, Section 12F.16(k), requires the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, to submit a report on the agency's participation with the Prescription Behavior Surveillance System to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety. The first report was due beginning September 1, 2016, and every two years thereafter. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

Should you have any questions, please contact Kody Kinsley, Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities at (919) 733-7011.

Sincerely,

Mandy Cohen, MD, MPH  
Secretary

cc:	Matt Gross	LT McCrimmon	Dave Richard	Rod Davis
	Kody Kinsley	Marjorie Donaldson	reports@ncleg.net	Joyce Jones
	Katherine Restrepo	Steve Owen	Lisa Wilks	Erin Matteson
	Denise Thomas	Deborah Landry	Mark Benton	Mark Collins
	Susan Perry-Manning	Theresa Matula	Zack Wortman	Leah Burns

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SECRETARY

August 31, 2018

**SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

The Honorable James L. Boles, Jr., Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Justice and Public Safety  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 528, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

The Honorable Ted Davis, Jr., Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Justice and Public Safety  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 417B, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

The Honorable Shirley B. Randleman, Chair  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Justice and Public Safety  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Room 628, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Chairmen:

Session Law 2015-241, Section 12F.16.(k), requires the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, to submit a report on the agency's participation with the Prescription Behavior Surveillance System to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety. The first report was due beginning September 1, 2016, and every two years thereafter. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

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**Report on Expanding Monitoring Capacity  
Session Law 2015-241, Section 12F.16. (k)**



**Report to the  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Health and Human Services**

**and  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on  
Justice and Public Safety**

**Prepared by  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

**August 31, 2018**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Section 12F.16.(j) of North Carolina Session Law 2015-241, requires the North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System (CSRS) to expand its monitoring capacity by establishing data use agreements with the Prescription Behavior Surveillance System. In order to participate, the CSRS is required to establish a data use agreement with the Center of Excellence at Brandeis University no later than January 1, 2016.

Section 12F.16.(k) of North Carolina Session Law 2015-241, requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, to report on its participation with the Prescription Behavior Surveillance System to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety. The first report is due beginning September 1, 2016, and every two years thereafter.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since January 2015, the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) has been developing reports for short-term analysis and licensing boards, as well as pro-active reports to prescribers and dispensers when data in the CSRS identifies one of their patients who may be engaging in potentially harmful behavior.

## **DATA USE AGREEMENTS WITH THE PRESCRIPTION BEHAVIOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM**

The PBSS project is a public health surveillance system that allows public health authorities to characterize and quantify the use and misuse of prescribed controlled substances. The main goal of PBSS is to create an early warning surveillance and evaluation tool based on de-identified, longitudinal data from state Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs). In 2016, DMH/DD/SAS submitted an official request to the PBSS to join the project going forward. However, PBSS had limited funding at the time and was not able to accept the request. In August 2018, we were informed by PBSS that their funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ended and they were in the process of securing additional funding. If successful, they will contact DMH/DD/SAS.

## **CURRENT CSRS ANALYTICAL EFFORTS**

As a result of funding appropriated by the General Assembly, DMH/DD/SAS is working with the Government Data Analytics Center (GDAC) to improve CSRS analytics and reporting. An initial Memorandum of Agreement was executed along with a scope of work. GDAC has completed practitioner and patient entity resolution to improve data quality. Work is underway to enhance and automate standard reports to licensing boards and to enhance reporting to other entities authorized under G.S. 90-113.74 to receive the data in order to address the state's opioid epidemic.

## **CONCLUSION**

Despite continued efforts from DMH/DD/SAS to develop a successful data use agreement to participate in PBSS, it is evident the program has its own limitations. DMH/DD/SAS is committed to continuing and expanding its scope of work with GDAC to improve the accessibility and use of data contained in the CSRS to achieve the purposes specified in N.C.G.S. 90-113.71 and the state's Opioid Action Plan.