

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 54.1-2523 and 54.1-2525 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Prescription Monitoring Program; information disclosed to the Emergency Department Information Exchange; redisclosure.

[H 648]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:
1. That §§ 54.1-2523 and 54.1-2525 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:
§ 54.1-2523. Confidentiality of data; disclosure of information; discretionary authority of

Director.
A. All data, records, and reports relating to the prescribing and dispensing of covered substances to recipients and any abstracts from such data, records, and reports that are in the possession of the Prescription Monitoring Program pursuant to this chapter and any material relating to the operation or security of the program shall be confidential and shall be exempt from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.) pursuant to subdivision 2 of § 2.2-3705.5. Records in possession of the Prescription Monitoring Program shall not be available for civil subpoena, nor shall such records be disclosed, discoverable, or compelled to be produced in any civil proceeding, nor shall such records be deemed admissible as evidence in any civil proceeding for any reason. Further, the Director shall only have discretion to disclose any such information as provided in subsections B and C.

B. Upon receiving a request for information in accordance with the Department's regulations and in compliance with applicable federal law and regulations, the Director shall disclose the following:

1. Information relevant to a specific investigation of a specific recipient or of a specific dispenser or prescriber to an agent who has completed the Virginia State Police Drug Diversion School designated by the superintendent of the Department of State Police or designated by the chief law-enforcement officer of any county, city, or town or campus police department to conduct drug diversion investigations pursuant to § 54.1-3405.

2. Information relevant to an investigation or inspection of or allegation of misconduct by a specific person licensed, certified, or registered by or an applicant for licensure, certification, or registration by a health regulatory board; information relevant to a disciplinary proceeding before a health regulatory board or in any subsequent trial or appeal of an action or board order to designated employees of the Department of Health Professions; or to designated persons operating the Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program pursuant to Chapter 25.1 (§ 54.1-2515 et seq.).

3. Information relevant to the proceedings of any investigatory grand jury or special grand jury that has been properly impaneled in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 13 (§ 19.2-191 et seq.) of Title 19.2.

4. Information relevant to a specific investigation of a specific recipient, dispenser, or prescriber to an agent of a federal law-enforcement agency with authority to conduct drug diversion investigations.

5. Information relevant to a specific investigation, supervision, or monitoring of a specific recipient for purposes of the administration of criminal justice pursuant to Chapter 1 (§ 9.1-100 et seq.) of Title 9.1 to a probation or parole officer as described in Article 2 (§ 53.1-141 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 53.1 or a local community-based probation officer as described in § 9.1-176.1 who has completed the Virginia State Police Drug Diversion School designated by the Director of the Department of Corrections or his designee.

6. Information relevant to a specific investigation of a specific individual into a possible delivery of a controlled substance in violation of § 18.2-474.1 to an investigator for the Department of Corrections who has completed the Virginia State Police Drug Diversion School and who has been designated by the Director of the Department of Corrections or his designee.

7. *Information about a specific recipient to the Emergency Department Care Coordination Program in accordance with subdivision B 6 of § 32.1-372.*

C. In accordance with the Department's regulations and applicable federal law and regulations, the Director may, in his discretion, disclose:

1. Information in the possession of the ~~program~~ Prescription Monitoring Program concerning a recipient who is over the age of 18 to that recipient. The information shall be mailed to the street or mailing address indicated on the recipient request form.

2. Information on a specific recipient to a prescriber, as defined in this chapter, for the purpose of establishing the treatment history of the specific recipient when such recipient is either under care and

57 treatment by the prescriber or the prescriber is consulting on or initiating treatment of such recipient. In
58 a manner specified by the Director in regulation, notice shall be given to patients that information may
59 be requested by the prescriber from the Prescription Monitoring Program.

60 3. Information on a specific recipient to a dispenser for the purpose of establishing a prescription
61 history to assist the dispenser in (i) determining the validity of a prescription in accordance with
62 § 54.1-3303 or (ii) providing clinical consultation on the care and treatment of the recipient. In a manner
63 specified by the Director in regulation, notice shall be given to patients that information may be
64 requested by the dispenser from the Prescription Monitoring Program.

65 4. Information relevant to an investigation or regulatory proceeding of a specific dispenser or
66 prescriber to other regulatory authorities concerned with granting, limiting or denying licenses,
67 certificates or registrations to practice a health profession when such regulatory authority licenses such
68 dispenser or prescriber or such dispenser or prescriber is seeking licensure by such other regulatory
69 authority.

70 5. Information relevant to an investigation relating to a specific dispenser or prescriber who is a
71 participating provider in the Virginia Medicaid program or information relevant to an investigation
72 relating to a specific recipient who is currently eligible for and receiving or who has been eligible for
73 and has received medical assistance services to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit of the Office of the
74 Attorney General or to designated employees of the Department of Medical Assistance Services, as
75 appropriate.

76 6. Information relevant to determination of the cause of death of a specific recipient to the designated
77 employees of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

78 7. Information for the purpose of bona fide research or education to qualified personnel; however,
79 data elements that would reasonably identify a specific recipient, prescriber, or dispenser shall be deleted
80 or redacted from such information prior to disclosure. Further, release of the information shall only be
81 made pursuant to a written agreement between such qualified personnel and the Director in order to
82 ensure compliance with this subdivision.

83 8. Information relating to prescriptions for covered substances issued by a specific prescriber, which
84 have been dispensed and reported to the *Prescription Monitoring* Program, to that prescriber.

85 9. Information about a specific recipient who is a member of a Virginia Medicaid managed care
86 program to a physician or pharmacist licensed in the Commonwealth and employed by the Virginia
87 Medicaid managed care program or to his clinical designee who holds a multistate licensure privilege to
88 practice nursing or a license issued by a health regulatory board within the Department of Health
89 Professions and is employed by the Virginia Medicaid managed care program. Such information shall
90 only be used to determine eligibility for and to manage the care of the specific recipient in a Patient
91 Utilization Management Safety or similar program. Notice shall be given to recipients that information
92 may be requested by a licensed physician or pharmacist employed by the Virginia Medicaid managed
93 care program from the Prescription Monitoring Program.

94 10. (Expires July 1, 2022) Information to the Board of Medicine about prescribers who meet a
95 certain threshold for prescribing covered substances for the purpose of requiring relevant continuing
96 education. The threshold shall be determined by the Board of Medicine in consultation with the
97 *Prescription Monitoring* Program.

98 11. Information about a specific recipient who is currently eligible for and receiving medical
99 assistance from the Department of Medical Assistance Services to a physician or pharmacist licensed in
100 the Commonwealth or to his clinical designee who holds a multistate licensure privilege to practice
101 nursing or a license issued by a health regulatory board within the Department of Health Professions and
102 is employed by the Department of Medical Assistance Services.

103 Such information shall be used only to determine eligibility for and to manage the care of the
104 specific recipient in a Patient Utilization Management Safety or similar program. Notice shall be given
105 to recipients that information may be requested by a licensed physician or pharmacist employed by the
106 Department of Medical Assistance Services from the Prescription Monitoring Program.

107 D. The Director may enter into agreements for mutual exchange of information among prescription
108 monitoring programs in other jurisdictions, which shall only use the information for purposes allowed by
109 this chapter.

110 E. This section shall not be construed to supersede the provisions of § 54.1-3406 concerning the
111 divulging of confidential records relating to investigative information.

112 F. Confidential information that has been received, maintained or developed by any board or
113 disclosed by the board pursuant to subsection A shall not, under any circumstances, be available for
114 discovery or court subpoena or introduced into evidence in any medical malpractice suit or other action
115 for damages arising out of the provision of or failure to provide services. However, this subsection shall
116 not be construed to inhibit any investigation or prosecution conducted pursuant to Article 1 (§ 18.2-247
117 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2.

118 § 54.1-2525. Unlawful disclosure of information; disciplinary action authorized; penalties.

119 A. It shall be unlawful for any person having access to the confidential information in the possession
120 of the program or any data or reports produced by the program to disclose such confidential information
121 except as provided in this chapter. Any person having access to the confidential information in the
122 possession of the program or any data or reports produced by the program who discloses such
123 confidential information in violation of this chapter shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor upon
124 conviction.

125 B. It shall be unlawful for any person who lawfully receives confidential information from the
126 Prescription Monitoring Program to redisclose or use such confidential information in any way other
127 than the authorized purpose for which the request was made. Any person who lawfully receives
128 information from the Prescription Monitoring Program and discloses such confidential information in
129 violation of this chapter shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor upon conviction.

130 C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit (i) a person who prescribes or dispenses a covered substance
131 to a recipient required to be reported to the program from redisclosing information obtained from the
132 Prescription Monitoring Program to another prescriber or dispenser who has ~~prescribed or dispensed a~~
133 ~~covered substance to a responsibility for treating the recipient~~ or (ii) a person who prescribes a covered
134 substance from placing information obtained from the Prescription Monitoring Program in the recipient's
135 medical record.

136 D. Information obtained from the Prescription Monitoring Program pursuant to subdivision B 6 of
137 § 32.1-372 shall become part of the patient's medical record.

138 E. Unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information received from the Prescription
139 Monitoring Program shall also be grounds for disciplinary action by the relevant health regulatory board.