

Mandatory Drug Reporting Exemption Saves Wisconsin's Veterinary Small Businesses over \$7 Million Annually

Governor Walker Signs Veterinary Exemption from PDMP



After a year and a half of efforts, on March 13, 2013, Gov. Scott Walker signed a new law that exempts Wisconsin veterinarians from the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).

"This is a huge feat for our members," says Kim Brown Pokorny, WVMA Executive Director. "This law would have cost veterinary clinics in Wisconsin over \$7 million annually."

The PDMP is designed to curb human abuse of highly addictive prescription medications. However, the requirements surrounding the data collection and submission were created for human medicine and were not compatible with veterinary medicine. Ultimately, including veterinarians in this program would have hindered the effectiveness of this public policy. Prior to achieving the exemption, WVMA leadership and staff, led by our legislative counsel, worked tirelessly with the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), the Pharmacy Examining Board and the Wisconsin State Legislature to make modifications to the PDMP rules. Several important amendments to the PDMP were adopted, but the program was still very problematic for veterinarians. Accordingly, WVMA sought legislator leaders to pursue a statutory exemption from the PDMP for veterinarians. "It was always our goal to go after an exemption for our members," Brown Pokorny explains. "As their professional association, we watch for legislation and rules that have a substantial negative impact on veterinary medicine and small businesses. Both are important to our members and are important to the WVMA." One of the goals of the WVMA is to connect our members with the Wisconsin State Legislature and critical state agencies so that those who regulate our businesses, also understand our businesses. "Membership dues paid by our members allow us to be effective on these issues. The WVMA is working on issues even before they hit the radars of our members," she says. Another key to success is member activity at the grassroots level.

"As seen with PDMP, member contacts to legislators are key," she says. "That personal connection is crucial. When we ask our members to contact their legislators and help them understand veterinary medicine, it is a huge benefit to the entire Association. The multi-prong approach of the WVMA and personal member contacts help make our efforts successful."