

# LAW ALERT

## HEALTH CARE

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## New York's I-STOP Law Goes into Effect for Practitioners

A new law, the Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing (I-STOP) Law (§3343-a of the NYS Public Health Law) enacted one year ago, will go into effect on August 27, 2013, requiring practitioners who prescribe controlled substances to consult New York State's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) registry prior to prescribing Schedule II, III and IV controlled substances. The new law is intended to reduce "doctor-shopping" and over prescribing of controlled drugs and curb abuses and diversions of controlled substances which have led to increased addiction, violence, adverse drug events and deaths, and placed a heavy toll on the health care system.

**Compliance with the I-STOP law is MANDATORY and failure to abide by the new requirements could constitute professional misconduct and have adverse implications for a practitioner's license. If a practitioner cannot access the PMP as of August 27, 2013 because he/she failed to sign up for it, he/she will not be able to validly and legally prescribe a controlled substance to his/her patients**

Preparation by practitioners is a critical element in ensuring a smooth transition to using the new system. To prepare for I-STOP, Practitioners should do the following:

- Review the legal requirements of the I-STOP Law.
- Practitioners who prescribe controlled substances should establish a Health Commerce Systems (HCS) account with the following instructions:
  - Update login/passwords for HCS accounts (every practitioner who has been using NYS prescription forms has an existing HCS account). Even if practitioners have previously ordered their official NYS prescription forms from HCS via paper format, they must now establish an on-line HCS account to access the PMP under I-STOP
  - Become familiar with using the PMP which can be accessed by logging into your HCS account.
  - Appoint and train appropriate designees to access PMP on behalf of practitioner, and arrange for designees to obtain their own HCS account
  - Contact Commerce Account Management at 1-866-529-1890, Option 2 for difficulties with HCS accounts for unlicensed professionals
  - Although prior to August 27, 2013 designees cannot perform PMP patient searches, now is the time for the designees to obtain HCS accounts and for practitioners to complete the designation process.

- Develop office procedures, policies and protocols governing access to PMP, use of PMP information, and appropriate documentation.
- Monitor updates about the PMP and I-STOP requirements at the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement website.

**For more information please contact  
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