

## **Community Pharmacists Views of REMS on Opioid Use**

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### **Background/Purpose:**

Pharmacists have significant influence in the opioid space as they are often one of the last healthcare providers the patient speaks with before taking their medication. However, there is little existing research regarding the pharmacist's view on the Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) program and their perceived role in its effectiveness. Our study is a cross-sectional study, garnering input from pharmacists in the community setting.

### **Methods:**

Data was collected via surveys, and questions included to assess pharmacists' understanding of REMS for opioid use, pinpointing barriers of REMS, and observed effects on patient outcome. In order to analyze our data, we used descriptive statistics and analysis of variance.

### **Results:**

Survey results from 35 community pharmacists showed that the majority of community pharmacists were neutral on the statement of if their company provides an adequate built in program to submit REMS. Most pharmacists stated that discussion of the REMS program was frequent within their pharmacy environment. Pharmacists with more than 5 years of experience were more confident in their understanding of the implementation of the REMS program in their company. Pharmacists perceived the biggest burdens of REMS requirement is HCP training and patient education.

### **Conclusion:**

While the Food and Drug Administration REMS program stands as a proactive measure in addressing opioid-related risks, our study exposes the persisting challenges in mitigating harm associated with opioid use. It's imperative to understand the pharmacists' perspectives on the REMS program. Our findings highlight the need for enhanced support and education within pharmacy settings to optimize the effectiveness of REMS initiatives and ultimately improve patient outcomes. This study offers valuable insights into the pharmacist's role in the opioid crisis and paves the way for further research to inform comprehensive interventions.