The impact of Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances on meaningful use

As Meaningful Use (MU) requirements for e-prescribing become more stringent and the volume of controlled substance prescriptions continue to rise, implementing electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) is becoming more critical for organizations to meet MU Stage 2 requirements.
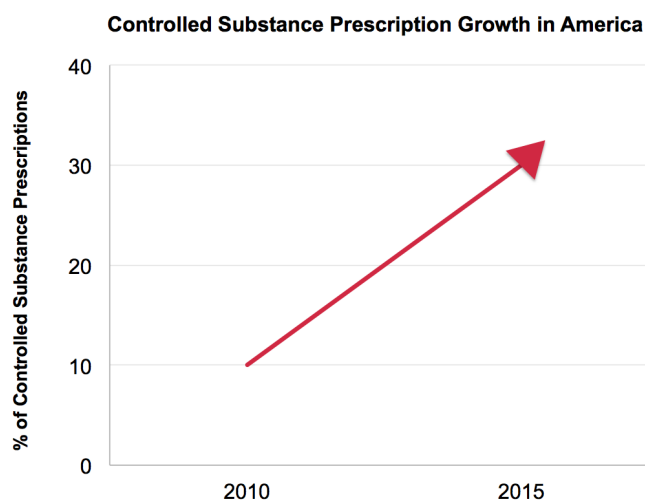
Key points

- To meet MU Stage 2, providers must process more than 50 percent of prescriptions electronically

- 58 percent of prescribing transactions involve controlled substances

- Adopting EPCS enables one e-prescribing workflow for all prescriptions and will help providers achieve MU requirements

Enabling EPCS can increase e-prescribing rates by eliminating dual workflows

Electronic prescribing is a core measure of Meaningful Use (MU). In Stage 2, eligible providers must process more than 50 percent of prescriptions electronically using a certified electronic health record (EHR) program. Because the MU criteria was established prior to the DEA's interim final rule allowing EPCS, including controlled substances in the e-prescribing calculation is optional, but not required. However, the increased volume of controlled substance prescriptions may make it difficult to achieve the 50 percent e-prescribing threshold for non-controlled substances without implementing EPCS.

Here's why. Controlled substances have increased from about 10 percent of all prescriptions in 2010 to about 30 percent in 2015. In fact, 58 percent of prescribing transactions involve controlled substances. The majority of controlled substances are prescribed in conjunction with non-controlled substances, so without EPCS, this increase in volume exacerbates the challenges of dual prescribing workflows: e-prescribing for non-controlled substances and printed, paper prescribing for schedule II-V controlled substances.

Controlled Substance Prescription Growth in America

By enabling EPCS, providers can e-prescribe all prescriptions, providing a consistent workflow experience for both prescribers and patients.

To eliminate confusion for patients, prescribers often default to a single, paper-based workflow when prescribing a mix of controlled and non-controlled substances for patients, decreasing e-prescribing utilization rates. The table below illustrates that if providers default to a paper-based workflow for all mixed prescriptions they would need to e-prescribe 93% of the non-controlled only prescriptions to meet the MU stage 2 utilization measure. By enabling EPCS, providers can e-prescribe all prescriptions, providing a consistent workflow experience for both prescribers and patients. One workflow means improved e-prescribing ratios, which makes it easier to obtain the MU stage 2 threshold of 50 percent.

The % of non-controlled prescriptions e-prescribed when being prescribed with a controlled substance	% of non-controlled prescriptions e-prescribed when prescribed with no controlled substances	E-prescribing utilization measure
0%	93%	50%

EPCS can help providers and patients cope with the reclassification of hydrocodone combination drugs
A major contributing factor to the increase in controlled substance prescriptions is the reclassification of hydrocodone combination drugs (such as Vicodin) to Schedule II controlled substances. In an effort to curb substance abuse, the DEA's ruling placed tighter controls (allowing no faxing, verbal orders, or refills) on a large number of popular medications, including Vicodin, which is the most prescribed medication in the United States with more than 135 million prescriptions written in 2013. This reclassification will increase the number of prescriptions written for controlled substances by as much as 25 percent or more, contributing significantly to the challenge of dual prescribing workflows. By enabling EPCS, providers have one, efficient e-prescribing workflow for all prescriptions, making it easier for patients and prescribers while also helping organizations reach MU guidelines and preserve CMS reimbursements.
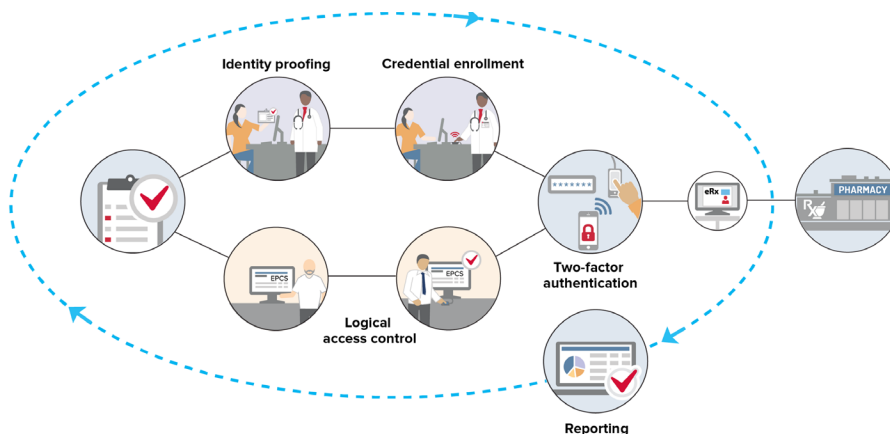
Enabling EPCS securely with Imprivata Confirm ID for EPCS

The DEA allows EPCS only if certain requirements are met and a secure, auditable chain of trust is established for the entire EPCS process. Imprivata Confirm ID for EPCS is the fast, secure signing solution for e-prescribing of controlled substances. Imprivata Confirm ID is the most comprehensive platform for provider identity proofing, supervised enrollment of credentials, two-factor authentication, and reporting, helping healthcare organizations meet federal and state-level requirements for EPCS. Imprivata Confirm ID for EPCS also gives care providers a fast and convenient e-prescribing workflow by integrating with leading EHRs and supporting the broadest range of two-factor authentication modalities. By giving providers a single, efficient, and consistent e-prescribing workflow for all medications, Imprivata Confirm ID for EPCS drives adoption of EPCS and helps organizations realize the substantial benefits.

Imprivata Confirm ID elegantly simplifies EPCS workflows by:

- Delivering a complete solution for provider identity proofing, supervised enrollment, and two-factor authentication

- Providing the broadest range of DEA-compliant two-factor authentication modalities, including Hands Free Authentication, push token notification, and fingerprint biometrics, to make EPCS fast and convenient for providers

- Integrating directly into the e-prescribing workflows of leading EHR application

- Streamlining order signing by only prompting providers for what authentication methods are available and allowed

- Operating as a stand-alone solution or in any single sign-on environment

Imprivata Confirm ID: Fast, Secure Signing for E-prescribing of Controlled Substances

For more information about Imprivata Confirm ID and how it helps meet DEA and state-level compliance requirements for EPCS,
visit www.imprivata.com/EPCS.

Imprivata Confirm ID enables a major shift to electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) by delivering the first comprehensive product that simplifies adoption of regulatory requirements for EPCS.

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About Imprivata

Imprivata, the healthcare IT security company, enables healthcare securely by establishing trust between people, technology, and information to address critical compliance and security challenges while improving productivity and the patient experience.

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