

Cross-border trafficking of prescription oxycodone products manufactured in Canada

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Introduction

- Abuse of prescription opioids is a significant public health problem in both Canada and the United States (US).
- As more restrictions are imposed on prescription opioid access, access to these drugs via unconventional illicit sources is likely to be explored.
- One potential source is the diversion of products across the US-Canada borders.

Methods

- StreetRx.com
 - Publicly accessible crowdsourcing website that collects anonymously reported street price data.
- US site users reporting acquisition of certain oxycodone products manufactured only in Canada were prompted to confirm the country in which the product was acquired.
- Reports to the US StreetRx website (August through November 2016) were analyzed to quantify prescription oxycodone products manufactured in Canada, but acquired in the US.

Results

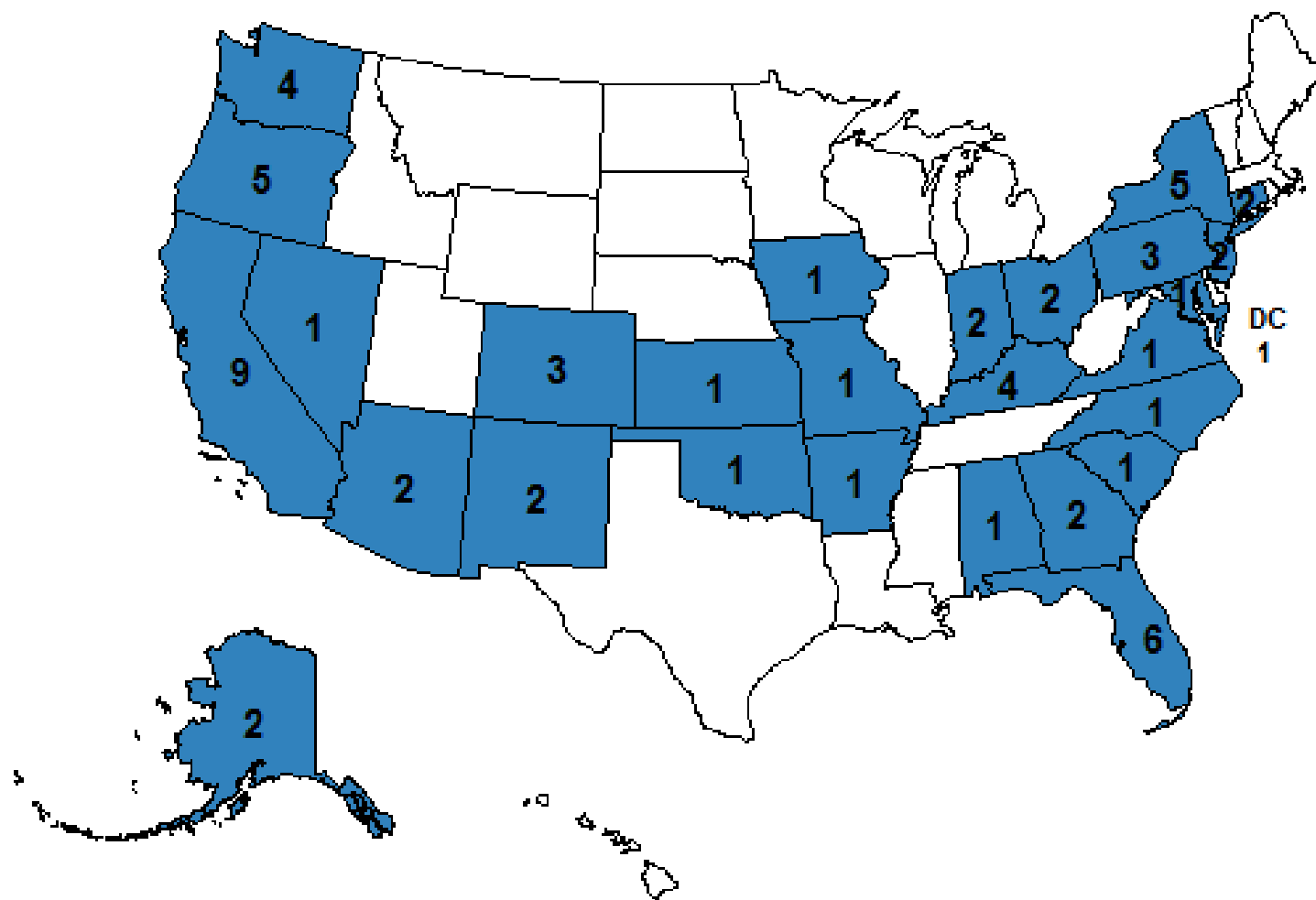
- 67 reports of Canadian prescription oxycodone products reported to the US StreetRx website.
 - 51 (76%) confirmed that the selected drug was acquired in the US.
 - 9 (13%) confirmed that the drug was acquired in Canada but used in the US.
 - 7 (10%) did not report the country in which the drug was acquired.
- 62 (92.5%) involved crushable oxycodone products.
- Only 5 (7.5%) involved OxyNEO, the only tamper resistant oxycodone product in our analysis.
- Reports in the US came from diverse geographic areas and were not concentrated in states bordering Canada.

Table 1. Reports of Canadian Oxycodone Products to the US StreetRx Website, August-November 2016

Oxycodone Product ^a	Confirmed Country of Purchase			
	Not answered	US	Canada	Total
Apotex CR	3	31	2	36
Cobalt CR	2	15	3	20
OxyIR	0	0	0	0
OxyNEO [®]	2	1	2	5
Sandoz CR	0	1	0	1
Targin [®]	0	0	1	1
Pharmascience CR	0	3	1	4
Total	7	51	9	67

^a When a site user reports these Canadian products in the US, they are prompted to confirm the country in which the product was acquired

Reports of Canadian Oxycodone ER Products per US State



Limitations

- Data come from anonymous online reports of prescription medications that cannot be confirmed.

Conclusions

- Illicit trade of prescription oxycodone products from Canada to the US is reported.
- This trade is not limited to states near the US-Canada border.