

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

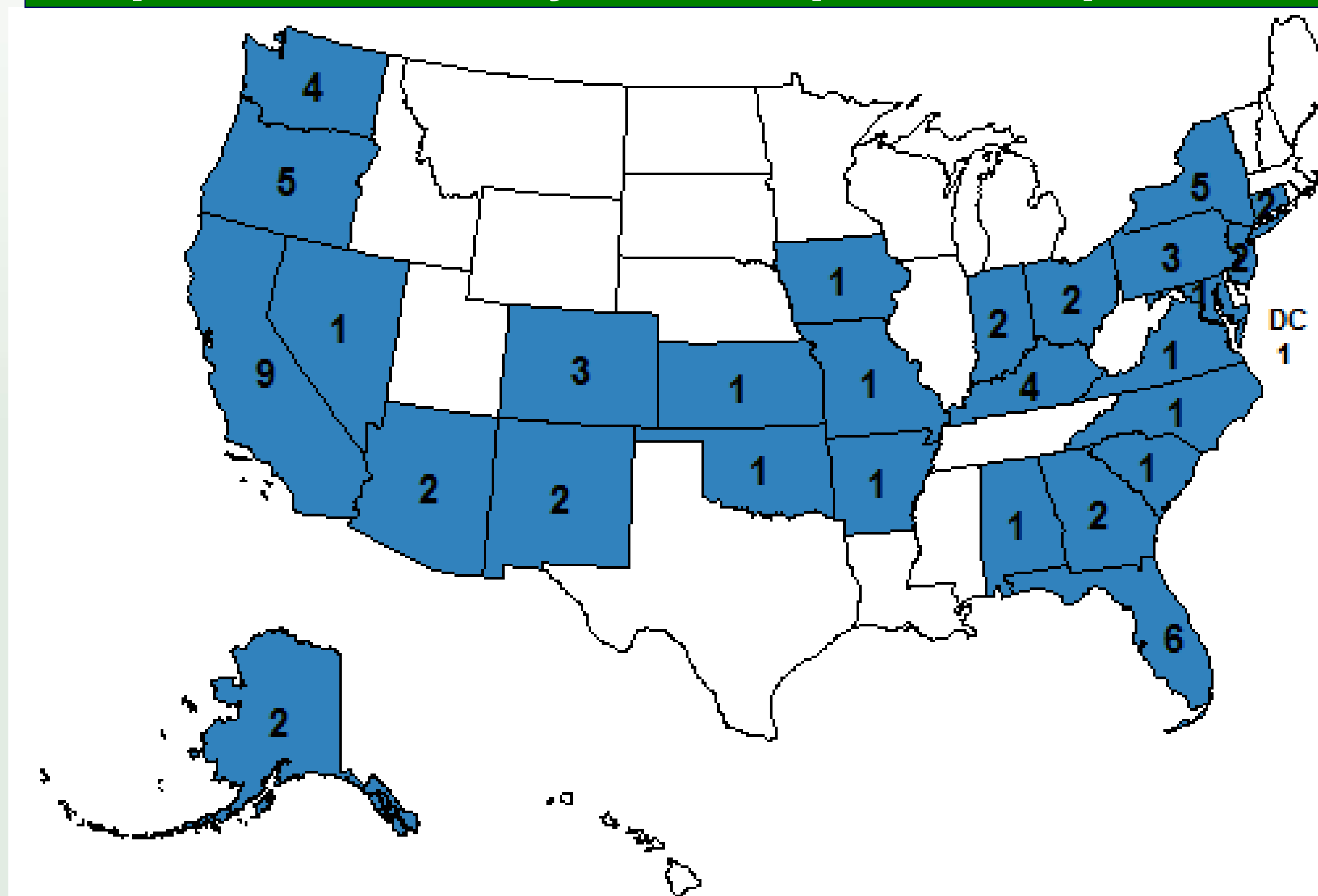
- StreetRx.com is a publicly accessible website which collects anonymously reported street price data for prescription and illicit drugs.
- As of August 2016, US site users reporting acquisition of certain oxycodone products (listed in table) manufactured only in Canada were prompted to confirm the country in which the product was acquired.
- Reports to the US StreetRx website (August through November 2016) were studied to quantify this cross-border trafficking of prescription oxycodone products manufactured in Canada and acquired in the US.

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

Oxycodone Product ^a	Confirmed Country of Purchase			Total
	Not answered	US	Canada	
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 CA Oxycodone products per State



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.

Limitations

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

Disclosures

The System is supported by subscriptions from pharmaceutical manufacturers for surveillance, research and reporting services. The System is the property of Canadian Consumer Product and Pharmaceutical Safety Inc. which retains exclusive ownership of all data, databases and systems. Subscribers do not participate in data collection or analysis, nor do they have access to the raw data.

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Results

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