

# How Can You Better Manage Controlled Substances In Your VA Facility?

Keeping track of controlled substances can be a **real challenge**<sup>1</sup>



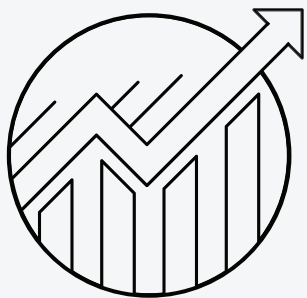
Diverted for personal use



Sold on the street



Simply disappeared



Drug losses or theft at federal hospitals<sup>1</sup>:

**272**  
incidents in 2009

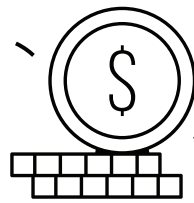
**2,926**  
incidents in 2015

**2,457**  
incidents in 2016

Drug diversion at a VA facility:

**4,000** Oxycodone pills  
**3,300** Hydrocodone pills  
**308 oz.** Promethazine with codein syrup  
**14,000+** Viagra and Cialis pills

Pharmacy technician used his VA access to a medical supplier's web portal to **order and divert**<sup>3</sup>



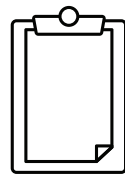
Cost of  
**\$77,000**  
to the facility

Street value of  
**\$160,000+**

How does this affect the community?  
Opioids released for  
**illegal use**

Patients did not get their  
**medications**

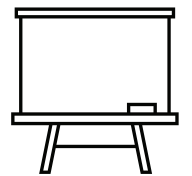
Nonadherence to Veterans Health Administration policy at select facilities<sup>2</sup>



Lacked preventive procedures for missed inspections



Written procedures did not fully include the 9 VHA program requirements



Lack of training on required inspection procedures



GAO recommendations for VA medical facilities<sup>2</sup>

**1**

Establish an additional control procedure

**2**

Periodically compare facility inspection procedures to VHA's policy requirements

**3**

Improve training of controlled substance coordinators

**4**

Design and implement a process to address nonadherence with program requirements

**5**

Review facilities' quarterly trend reports for nonadherence

**6**

Establish and implement a review process to comply with VHA's policy requirements

<sup>1</sup> DeBenedette V. Drug diversion on the rise at VA Medical Centers. Drug Topics. February 21, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> United States Government Accountability Office, Report to the Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, House of Representatives. VA Health Care: Actions Needed to Ensure Medical Facility Controlled Substance Inspection Programs Meet Agency Requirements. February 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Veterans Affairs Employees Charged with Stealing and Selling Prescription Drugs. (February 8, 2017). Retrieved April 24, 2017, from <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edar/pr/veterans-affairs-employees-charged-stealing-and-selling-prescription-drugs>.

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