Metric by Month, County, and Age Group

The California Department of Justice (DOJ) created this document to summarize key information about data from the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES). If you have additional questions, please contact CURES at CURES@doj.ca.gov and reference the file(s) you are reviewing.

Data Element and Values Defined:

Variable Label	Report Description
xYear	Year the record was dispensed.
xMonth	Month the record was dispensed.
State	State in which the record was dispensed. Only California (CA) is included.
County	California county name.
Age_Group	Age group of the patient: ≤ 14; 15-24; 25-44; 45-64; ≥65
Rundatetime	Date and time the record was updated or created, DDMMYYYY:HH:MM:SS
PatCount_Opioid	Number of patients receiving opioid prescriptions in patient's locale.

Data Characteristics and Known Limitations:

1. DOJ does not independently verify the accuracy of the information reported by dispensers. While the system does perform format validations to ensure reported records comply with department standards, the dispensers are responsible for ensuring accuracy of all reported data.
2. Metrics by Month are generated three months after the end of the target month.
3. Records are based on information available at the time the report was generated and are subject to change as a result of subsequent reporting by dispensers of new records or revisions/deletions of previously reported records.
4. Information reported to CURES depends, in part, on the statutory provision under which the dispensation is reported.
    - Pharmacies are required to report specified information for each Schedule II, Schedule III, Schedule IV, or Schedule V controlled substance dispensed. (Health & Saf. Code §11165, subd. (d).)
    - Prescribers that directly dispense pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 4170 are required to report specified information for each Schedule II, Schedule III, Schedule IV controlled substance dispensed. (Health & Saf. Code §11190, subd. (c).)
5. Administrations of controlled substances are not required to be reported to CURES. Whether the delivery of a controlled substance to a patient triggers a reporting requirement typically hinges on whether the health care practitioner "dispenses" the controlled substance within the meaning of the California Health and Safety Code.
6. DOJ uses an external vendor to collect and forward prescription data to CURES.

7. Patient data reported to CURES does not include a unique identifier. For analytical purposes, CURES matches records by patient name, date of birth, and location to establish a single patient identity across variations in data reporting. The patient matching process represents a best approximation, not a certainty, due to the absence of a unique identifier and reporting discrepancies. Patient matching is completed using the following two possible combinations:
    - Patient Name, Date of Birth, and Five Digit Zip Code
    - Patient Name, Date of Birth, Street Address, and City
8. Reporting of non-controlled substance prescription drugs to CURES is permitted but not required.
9. CURES is not a comprehensive source of information for dispensations of buprenorphine: a medication commonly used for substance abuse disorders. Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations section 2.36 states that federally-funded facilities must receive consent from the patient to report that patient's buprenorphine dispensation to CURES.
10. CURES uses a drug dictionary vendor to identify controlled substance National Drug Codes (NDC) reported by dispensers.
11. CURES uses information from the Drug Enforcement Agency to populate locale information for prescribers.

Chronology of Updates to CURES

- In **2021**, Schedule V controlled substance prescriptions were added to the CURES reporting requirements for dispensers who report under Health and Safety Code section 11165, subdivision (d).
- In **2024**, CURES began using the "date sold" field to determine the date of dispensation of records. If the "date sold" value is not provided or prior to the date "filled value," the "date filled" field will be used instead. Prior to this change, only the "date filled" field was used.
- In **2026**, CURES began removing all prescriptions for testosterone and mifepristone pursuant to Assembly Bill No. 82 (2024-2025 Reg. Sess.).