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DOJ OIG Releases Report on the DEA's Registration Process for Medical Practitioners

Department of Justice (DOJ) Assistant Inspector General Performing the Duties of the Inspector General M. Sean O'Neill announced today the release of a report reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) controls to ensure medical practitioners who are licensed to dispense, administer, or prescribe controlled substances meet DEA registration requirements. DEA registration plays a critical role in ensuring that the distribution and handling of controlled substances, such as opioids, are properly managed by the pharmaceutical industry and by the licensed medical practitioners who prescribe them.

The DOJ Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) audit found that the DEA could improve its controls over its registration process for medical practitioners. Specifically, we found that the DEA has not instituted quality assurance processes to help ensure that the high volume of initial registrations and renewals received by the DEA each year are complete and accurate.

Without quality assurance processes for applications, unqualified or otherwise ineligible medical practitioners may obtain a DEA registration, risking illicit and improper prescribing of controlled substances.

We also found that the DEA does not include registered medical practitioners in its annual workplan for scheduled, or routine, investigations, even though medical practitioners make up the vast majority of all registrants. This may increase the risk that non-compliant practitioners are being overlooked. Additionally, as of April 2025, the DEA had fewer than 700 Diversion Investigators conducting these investigations who are responsible for over 1.9 million medical practitioners.

Our findings also revealed that the DEA does not adequately verify that eligible individuals who have been granted a DEA registration have satisfied the training requirements included in the Medication Access and Training Expansion Act.

The OIG made five recommendations to improve the DEA's management of its registration process for medical practitioners. The DEA agreed with all five recommendations.

Report: Today's report is available on [the OIG's website](#).

Please contact us at OIG.Media@usdoj.gov if you have any questions.

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