

Follow-up: DEA Limits Opioid Production in 2018

In September of 2017, [we reported](#) on the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) intent to limit opioid production in 2018. On April 17, 2018, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the proposed changes to overly addictive (opioid) drug manufacturing quotas. He stated: "Under this proposed new rule, if DEA believes that a company's opioids are being diverted for misuse, then they will reduce the amount of opioids that company can make."¹

A New Approach to Opioid Management

The hope is to counter the opioid epidemic by limiting an excess supply of opioids and cracking down on illegal distribution. Sessions has assembled an opioid task force and deployed prosecutors to areas of the country that are at-risk with a mandate to bring more cases against traffickers.² Previously, the focus was on prescribers who overprescribed. Now the DEA will also look to manufacturers to tie their available supply of opioids to an estimated population of individuals who have a legitimate medical need for these drugs.

The Impact of Reduced Supply

As stated in September and again confirmed in the first 2017 Drug Trends series, First Script and our clients have consistently seen reductions in opioid usage due, in part, to programs we have put in place. The newly reduced DEA production quota should not affect access to these medications for your injured workers utilizing these therapies. The 2018 quota will include a surplus for incidentals. If the market demonstrates higher demand for opioids, the DEA can reverse its decision and increase the quota for production.

For more information, please contact your Account Manager or Account Pharmacist.

¹ http://www.businessinsurance.com/article/20180417/NEWS06/912320654/US-Drug-Enforcement-Administration-proposes-rules-to-rein-in-opioid-manufacturin?utm_campaign=BI20180417DailyBriefing&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ActiveCampaign

² <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-justice-dea-opioids/u-s-drug-agency-proposes-rules-to-rein-in-opioid-manufacturing-idUSKBN1HO2U1>