



DEVELOPING DATA

Few Misused Rx Drugs Are Prescribed in Urgent Care

■ Alan A. Ayers, MBA, MAcc

DRUG CLASSES

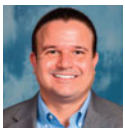
Opioid Pain Relievers	Stimulants	Depressants
~1 in 1,000 0.11% of total prescriptions written	~5 in 1,000 0.51% of total prescriptions written	~6 in 10,000 0.06% of total prescriptions written
88.7% of centers had no prescriptions written	85.5% of centers had no prescriptions written	81.1% of centers had no prescriptions written
Examples: Dilaudid, Lorcet, Lortab, OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan, Tylox, Vicodin	Examples: Adderall, Concerta, Ritalin	Examples: Librium, Valium, Xanax

According to the United States Department of Justice, the most common prescription drugs that are misused fall into 1 of 3 categories:

- opioid pain relievers/narcotics;
- depressants; and
- stimulants.

Experity EMR data encapsulating 17,526,083 prescriptions written at 3,037 urgent care centers from January 1 to August 20, 2024, shows the vast majority of urgent care centers do not prescribe these medications at all, and of those that do, these medications represent a very small percentage of total prescriptions written by those practices.

For example, accounting for all forms and dosages of the stimulant drugs amphetamine/dextroamphetamine (Adderall) and methylphenidate (Concerta, Ritalin), only 14.5% of urgent care centers provided even 1 prescription, meaning 85.5% did not prescribe these medications at all. And of those who did provide prescriptions, these drugs constituted only 0.5% of all prescriptions written, which is equal to approximately 5 in 1,000 prescriptions. The Department of Justice states: "An estimated 36 million U.S. residents aged 12 and older abused prescription drugs at least once in their lifetime. ■"



Alan A. Ayers, MBA, MAcc is President of Urgent Care Consultants and Senior Editor of *The Journal of Urgent Care Medicine*.