# Controlled Substances Reporting System Annual Report

**NC GS 90-113.75B**
**Amended by Session Law 2017-74, Section 12**

**Report to the**

**Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services**

**North Carolina Medical Board**

**North Carolina Board of Podiatry Examiners**

**North Carolina Board of Nursing**

**North Carolina Dental Board**

**North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board**

**North Carolina Board of Pharmacy**

**By**

**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

**February 28, 2020**

## INTRODUCTION

§ 90-113.75B *Annually on February 1, beginning February 1, 2019, the Department shall report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the North Carolina Medical Board, the North Carolina Board of Podiatry Examiners, the North Carolina Board of Nursing, the North Carolina Dental Board, the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board, and the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy on data reported to the controlled substances reporting system.*

## BACKGROUND

In 2017, House Bill 243 was introduced with several sections directly addressing the North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System (CSRS). It was signed into law on June 29, 2017. One of the requirements in this law is an annual report to the General Assembly and licensing boards (as specified in the introduction above) to be delivered on February 1st of each year beginning in 2019. The report must include at least all of the following information about targeted controlled substances reported to the system during the preceding calendar year:

(1) The total number of prescriptions dispensed, broken down by Schedule.
(2) Demographics about the ultimate users to whom prescriptions were dispensed.
(3) Statistics regarding the number of pills dispensed per prescription.
(4) The number of ultimate users who were prescribed a controlled substance by two or more practitioners.
(5) The number of ultimate users to whom a prescription was dispensed in more than one county.
(6) The categories of practitioners prescribing controlled substances and the number of prescriptions authorized by each category of practitioner. For the purpose of this subdivision, medical doctors, surgeons, palliative care practitioners, oncologists and other practitioners specializing in oncology, pain management practitioners, practitioners who specialize in hematology, including the treatment of sickle cell disease, and practitioners who specialize in treating substance use disorder shall be treated as distinct categories of practitioners.
(7) Any other data deemed appropriate and requested by the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the North Carolina Medical Board, the North Carolina Board of Podiatry Examiners, the North Carolina Board of Nursing, the North Carolina Dental Board, the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board, or the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy.

## DATA COLLECTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

Pharmacies in North Carolina are responsible for submitting data on any Schedule II-V controlled substances they dispense no later than the close of the next business day after the prescription is delivered. The data comes in a standard American Society for Automation in Pharmacy (ASAP) format, which includes details on the transaction such as the patient, prescriber, and pharmacy. In June 2019, Veterinarians that dispense controlled substances from their practice started to report to the CSRS.

The quality of the prescription data is dependent on the accuracy of pharmacist submissions. Prescriptions are constantly being added and modified within the system, so the values in this report will change slightly with time. Prescriber specialty (Exhibit 6) is based on self-reported specialties in the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES), the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the North Carolina Medical Board, and the CSRS.

**EXHIBITS AND NOTES**

## Exhibit 1: Prescriptions by Schedule

In total, 18,057,312 controlled substance prescriptions were dispensed in 2019[1]. In 2018, 18,389,645 prescriptions for controlled substances were dispensed. The largest decline has been seen in the number of Schedule II controlled substances dispensed. Schedule II controlled substances were the most dispensed in 2019, accounting for 46% of all controlled substance prescriptions dispensed. This is followed by prescriptions in Schedule IV, accounting for 42% of all controlled substance prescriptions dispensed. The most common type of drugs in Schedule II and Schedule IV are opioids and benzodiazepines respectively. See Exhibit 6 for further information.

In 2019, the proportion of human prescriptions listed as uncategorized was 1%, compared to 4.5% in 2018. The proportion of veterinary prescriptions listed as uncategorized was 14%.

**Table 1.1 - Total Prescriptions by Schedule in 2019**

| Schedule | Human Rx | Veterinary Rx | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| II | 8,236,591 | 15,834 | 8,252,425 |
| III | 1,392,084 | 2,461 | 1,394,545 |
| IV | 7,408,222 | 109,116 | 7,517,338 |
| V | 726,183 | 789 | 726,972 |
| Data Missing | 145,162 | 20,870 | 166,032 |
| **Total** | **17,908,242** | **149,070** | **18,057,312** |

Schedule II substances are currently recognized for medical use but have a high potential for abuse, which may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence. Examples include Hydrocodone, Oxycodone, Fentanyl, Amphetamine Salts and Cocaine.

Schedule III substances have a potential for abuse that is less than schedule II and may lead to moderate dependence. Examples include: Buprenorphine, Ketamine, Tylenol with codeine, testosterone, and anabolic steroids.

Schedule IV substances have a lower potential for abuse compared to schedule III. Examples include: benzodiazepines such as alprazolam (Xanax®), carisoprodol (Soma®), clonazepam (Klonopin®), clorazepate (Tranxene®), diazepam (Valium®).

Schedule V substances have lower potential for abuse than Schedule IV and consist of preparations containing limited quantities of certain narcotics and are generally used for antidiarrheal, antitussive, and analgesic (pain relief) purposes. Examples include Robitussin AC, Lomotil, and Lyrica.

[1] This data is accurate as of 03 January 2020. Some variation may occur due to late submissions.

## Exhibit 2: Demographics

The data has been aggregated by two demographic categories: Counties (Table 2.1) and Age Group and Gender (Table 2.2). These tables contain a combination of human and veterinary prescriptions due to the small numbers in the veterinary category. This is a count of unique patients may differ from the sum of all categories because patients may have moved between counties during the reporting period causing them to be indicated in more than one county.

It is noted that Mecklenburg has the smallest controlled substance prescription per patient ratio of all North Carolina counties (4.91 prescriptions per patient) and Mitchell has the highest (8.03) See Table 2.1 below. The rate of prescriptions per 1,000 residents of a county has been included as an alternative metric to understand trends within geographic areas. For example, whilst Mecklenburg has the smallest rate of prescriptions dispensed per patient, the rate of prescriptions per 1,000 population is mid-range at 1,168.21.

***Table 2.1 - Number of Controlled Substance Prescriptions Dispensed by County of Patient Residence in 2019***

| NC County | Prescriptions | Patients | Rx per Patient | Rx per 1,000 population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alamance | 272,355 | 47,345 | 5.75 | 1,647.70 |
| Alexander | 86,334 | 11,787 | 7.32 | 2,227.69 |
| Alleghany | 20,509 | 3,559 | 5.76 | 1,815.44 |
| Anson | 39,593 | 7,297 | 5.43 | 1,545.03 |
| Ashe | 58,301 | 8,235 | 7.08 | 2,145.55 |
| Avery | 42,021 | 5,971 | 7.04 | 2,324.17 |
| Beaufort | 116,767 | 16,453 | 7.1 | 2,465.42 |
| Bertie | 34,502 | 6,058 | 5.7 | 1,739.80 |
| Bladen | 65,258 | 9,651 | 6.76 | 1,928.03 |
| Brunswick | 302,828 | 46,287 | 6.54 | 2,186.58 |
| Buncombe | 435,319 | 70,459 | 6.18 | 1,625.54 |
| Burke | 196,444 | 26,675 | 7.36 | 2,151.23 |
| Cabarrus | 354,983 | 59,625 | 5.95 | 1,661.77 |
| Caldwell | 202,191 | 28,002 | 7.22 | 2,389.54 |
| Camden | 13,838 | 2,612 | 5.3 | 1,322.44 |
| Carteret | 157,373 | 22,884 | 6.88 | 2,212.87 |
| Caswell | 25,840 | 3,480 | 7.43 | 1,090.43 |
| Catawba | 366,964 | 54,948 | 6.68 | 2,324.04 |
| Chatham | 71,295 | 12,635 | 5.64 | 914.86 |
| Cherokee | 66,748 | 9,700 | 6.88 | 2,193.20 |
| Chowan | 21,785 | 4,385 | 4.97 | 1,549.54 |
| Clay | 24,432 | 3,779 | 6.47 | 2,066.83 |
| Cleveland | 244,518 | 36,276 | 6.74 | 2,467.54 |

| NC County | Prescriptions | Patients | Rx per Patient | Rx per 1,000 population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Columbus | 142,550 | 19,597 | 7.27 | 2,505.10 |
| Craven | 207,521 | 32,823 | 6.32 | 1,998.20 |
| Cumberland | 495,131 | 83,531 | 5.93 | 1,501.83 |
| Currituck | 31,801 | 5,475 | 5.81 | 1,151.79 |
| Dare | 70,792 | 11,701 | 6.05 | 1,886.58 |
| Davidson | 296,884 | 45,198 | 6.57 | 1,755.67 |
| Davie | 89,856 | 14,207 | 6.32 | 2,053.24 |
| Duplin | 85,107 | 14,635 | 5.82 | 1,433.19 |
| Durham | 338,515 | 66,263 | 5.11 | 1,072.91 |
| Edgecombe | 83,420 | 14,984 | 5.57 | 1,621.79 |
| Forsyth | 637,374 | 111,748 | 5.7 | 1,676.94 |
| Franklin | 97,578 | 16,590 | 5.88 | 1,421.30 |
| Gaston | 531,317 | 74,293 | 7.15 | 2,382.93 |
| Gates | 10,802 | 2,045 | 5.28 | 897.4 |
| Graham | 20,086 | 2,762 | 7.27 | 2,261.94 |
| Granville | 77,867 | 13,023 | 5.98 | 1,273.34 |
| Greene | 26,639 | 4,513 | 5.9 | 1,237.81 |
| Guilford | 847,117 | 152,301 | 5.56 | 1,594.04 |
| Halifax | 93,796 | 15,578 | 6.02 | 1,834.64 |
| Harnett | 195,440 | 29,806 | 6.56 | 1,444.66 |
| Haywood | 130,928 | 19,867 | 6.59 | 2,068.83 |
| Henderson | 204,592 | 34,513 | 5.93 | 1,710.99 |
| Hertford | 33,933 | 5,983 | 5.67 | 1,427.86 |
| Hoke | 58,877 | 10,406 | 5.66 | 1,046.07 |
| Hyde | 7,960 | 1,267 | 6.28 | 1,417.63 |
| Iredell | 369,130 | 59,069 | 6.25 | 2,018.04 |
| Jackson | 66,433 | 10,220 | 6.5 | 1,502.81 |
| Johnston | 285,759 | 47,274 | 6.04 | 1,390.40 |
| Jones | 23,099 | 3,563 | 6.48 | 2,230.93 |
| Lee | 122,793 | 20,588 | 5.96 | 2,059.32 |
| Lenoir | 111,337 | 18,923 | 5.88 | 1,944.55 |
| Lincoln | 179,784 | 28,291 | 6.35 | 2,093.19 |
| Macon | 58,662 | 10,417 | 5.63 | 1,622.78 |
| Madison | 36,564 | 5,674 | 6.44 | 1,605.87 |
| Martin | 49,470 | 7,667 | 6.45 | 2,121.90 |
| McDowell | 87,868 | 13,833 | 6.35 | 1,906.77 |
| Mecklenburg | 1,310,102 | 266,635 | 4.91 | 1,168.21 |

| NC County | Prescriptions | Patients | Rx per Patient | Rx per 1,000 population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mitchell | 38,174 | 4,756 | 8.03 | 2,511.61 |
| Montgomery | 45,976 | 7,634 | 6.02 | 1,638.96 |
| Moore | 172,963 | 29,057 | 5.95 | 1,719.38 |
| Nash | 158,080 | 26,876 | 5.88 | 1,674.72 |
| New Hanover | 440,045 | 69,416 | 6.34 | 1,875.93 |
| Northampton | 27,868 | 5,055 | 5.51 | 1,368.43 |
| Onslow | 275,688 | 43,509 | 6.34 | 1,380.96 |
| Orange | 194,684 | 35,172 | 5.54 | 1,339.11 |
| Pamlico | 22,146 | 3,505 | 6.32 | 1,663.99 |
| Pasquotank | 58,088 | 11,665 | 4.98 | 1,418.75 |
| Pender | 118,458 | 17,692 | 6.7 | 1,858.37 |
| Perquimans | 20,699 | 3,935 | 5.26 | 1,520.87 |
| Person | 80,727 | 11,648 | 6.93 | 2,011.89 |
| Pitt | 307,643 | 49,564 | 6.21 | 1,734.06 |
| Polk | 30,761 | 4,887 | 6.29 | 1,438.10 |
| Randolph | 247,658 | 38,635 | 6.41 | 1,689.43 |
| Richmond | 114,819 | 15,522 | 7.4 | 2,566.99 |
| Robeson | 284,083 | 42,800 | 6.64 | 2,172.77 |
| Rockingham | 244,350 | 31,374 | 7.79 | 2,664.87 |
| Rowan | 282,281 | 41,960 | 6.73 | 1,962.90 |
| Rutherford | 151,675 | 21,376 | 7.1 | 2,232.06 |
| Sampson | 107,101 | 18,160 | 5.9 | 1,712.74 |
| Scotland | 75,703 | 11,839 | 6.39 | 2,132.30 |
| Stanly | 129,297 | 20,257 | 6.38 | 2,030.93 |
| Stokes | 112,087 | 15,900 | 7.05 | 2,400.61 |
| Surry | 172,558 | 25,381 | 6.8 | 2,368.90 |
| Swain | 43,853 | 6,123 | 7.16 | 2,867.71 |
| Transylvania | 70,904 | 10,493 | 6.76 | 2,018.73 |
| Tyrrell | 5,625 | 1,010 | 5.57 | 1,359.68 |
| Union | 348,871 | 63,244 | 5.52 | 1,474.01 |
| Vance | 76,191 | 12,705 | 6 | 1,703.85 |
| Wake | 1,462,875 | 282,262 | 5.18 | 1,337.20 |
| Warren | 19,672 | 3,743 | 5.26 | 983.26 |
| Washington | 21,392 | 3,630 | 5.89 | 1,754.02 |
| Watauga | 68,970 | 10,852 | 6.36 | 1,178.47 |
| Wayne | 185,815 | 32,807 | 5.66 | 1,469.46 |

| NC County | Prescriptions | Patients | Rx per Patient | Rx per 1,000 population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wilkes | 157,490 | 21,723 | 7.25 | 2,211.10 |
| Wilson | 135,961 | 23,401 | 5.81 | 1,641.15 |
| Yadkin | 88,602 | 12,875 | 6.88 | 2,349.50 |
| Yancey | 37,961 | 5,511 | 6.89 | 2,073.13 |
| _ Out Of State | 671,050 | 156,492 | 4.29 | . |
| Unspecified | 11,386 | 1,603 | 7.1 | . |
| **Total** | **18,057,312** | **3,049,294** | **5.92** | **1,719.04** |

| Range of values | From | To |
|---|---|---|
| Prescriptions | 5625 | 1462875 |
| Patients | 1010 | 282262 |
| Rx per patient | 4.29 | 8.03 |
| Rx per 1,000 population | 897.40 | 2867.70 |

***Table 2.2 - Number of Prescriptions Dispensed by Age and Gender***

| Age Range | Male | Female | Unknown | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-9 | 313,854 | 161,234 | 6,177 | 481,265 |
| 10-19 | 658,729 | 442,466 | 6,737 | 1,107,932 |
| 20-29 | 467,335 | 732,127 | 3,059 | 1,202,521 |
| 30-39 | 819,344 | 1,382,831 | 5,405 | 2,207,580 |
| 40-49 | 1,053,373 | 1,802,115 | 7,590 | 2,863,078 |
| 50-59 | 1,460,289 | 2,265,024 | 8,185 | 3,733,498 |
| 60-69 | 1,438,272 | 2,055,755 | 6,470 | 3,500,497 |
| 70-79 | 824,674 | 1,225,131 | 2,823 | 2,052,628 |
| 80+ | 285,047 | 621,531 | 1,170 | 907,748 |
| Unknown | 107 | 187 | 271 | 565 |
| **Total** | **7,321,024** | **10,688,401** | **47,887** | **18,057,312** |

The number of controlled substance prescriptions dispensed increases significantly between the 0-9 age range and the 0-19 age range. There is another significant increase between the 20-29 age group and 30-39 age group. The steepest increases is between the 40-49 age group and the 50-59 age group, after which the number of controlled substance prescriptions dispensed starts to decline. By gender, females

have a higher number of dispensed prescriptions for controlled substances than males from the 20-29 age group onwards.

## Exhibit 3: Pill Statistics

The classification of controlled substance with the highest number of prescriptions dispensed in 2019 was Opioids followed by Benzodiazepines. (Table 3.1 below). The majority of controlled substance prescriptions (46%) are dispensed in quantities of 30 pills or less. Opioids become the most commonly dispensed classification in pill quantities of 31-60 to 91-120 accounting for 38%, 45% and 80% respectively.

***Table 3.1 – Pill Quantity by Classification***

| Quantity Range | Benzo | Muscle Relaxant | Opioid | Sedative | Stimulant | No CDC Class | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-30 | 1,625,856 | 15,188 | 2,719,412 | 973,370 | 1,842,763 | 1,306,301 | 8,482,890 |
| 31-60 | 1,079,215 | 14,003 | 1,426,631 | 28,931 | 523,675 | 656,938 | 3,729,393 |
| 61-90 | 631,085 | 19,795 | 1,067,259 | 78,944 | 168,613 | 359,095 | 2,324,791 |
| 91-120 | 135,613 | 7,692 | 1,055,567 | 296 | 26,443 | 88,575 | 1,314,186 |
| 121-150 | 15,776 | 205 | 135,147 | 558 | 4,471 | 11,303 | 167,460 |
| 151-180 | 37,964 | 649 | 209,330 | 842 | 12,863 | 52,815 | 314,463 |
| 181+ | 19,076 | 786 | 93,053 | 41 | 3,856 | 31,373 | 148,185 |
| Not Pills | 27,636 | 0 | 475,233 | 417 | 25,950 | 1,046,708 | 1,575,944 |
| **Total** | **3,572,221** | **58,318** | **7,181,632** | **1,083,399** | **2,608,634** | **3,553,108** | **18,057,312** |

[^]No CDC Class – The Center for Disease Control (CDC) does not have a classification on file for the drug

## Exhibit 4: Patients with Multiple Prescribers

The data indicates that a majority (54%) of patients who were dispensed a controlled substance were prescribed by only one practitioner within the reporting period (Table 4.1 below). This is lower than the percentage noted in 2018 data (60%). Compared to 2018 the proportion of patients that see more than one prescriber has increased slightly in all prescriber counts. The cause of the increase is not known.

**Table 4.1 Prescriber counts (human patients)**

| Prescribers | Patients | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1,632,607 | 54.83% |
| 2 | 677,407 | 22.75% |
| 3 | 325,868 | 10.94% |
| 4 | 162,380 | 5.45% |
| 5 | 83,378 | 2.80% |
| 6 | 43,535 | 1.46% |
| 7 | 23,113 | 0.78% |
| 8 | 12,656 | 0.43% |
| 9 | 6,977 | 0.23% |
| 10+ | 9,782 | 0.33% |
| **Total** | **2,977,703** | . |

**Table 4.2 Prescriber counts (Veterinary)**

| Prescribers | Patients | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 65,040 | 89.30% |
| 2 | 6,429 | 8.83% |
| 3 | 1,116 | 1.53% |
| 4 | 202 | 0.28% |
| 5 | 34 | 0.05% |
| 6 | 8 | 0.01% |
| 7 | 3 | 0.00% |
| 8 | 2 | 0.00% |
| 9 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 10+ | 0 | 0.00% |
| **Total** | **72,834** | . |

Table 4.2 contains data for the veterinarian population. The data indicates that most animal owners see one prescriber for the purposes of treating an animal that they own.

## Exhibit 5: Patients with Multiple County Dispensing

The largest percentage of patients had controlled substance prescriptions dispensed in only one county (Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below). Compared to 2018 (Table 5.1) a larger proportion of patients in 2019 had a controlled substance dispensed in just one county. Compared to 2018, fewer patients are going to multiple counties to obtain their prescriptions for controlled substances.

**Table 5.1 - Dispenser Counties (Human patients)**

| Counties | Patients | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2,684,245 | 90.14% |
| 2 | 251,122 | 8.43% |
| 3 | 36,164 | 1.21% |
| 4 | 5,298 | 0.18% |
| 5 | 723 | 0.02% |
| 6 | 111 | 0.00% |
| 7 | 23 | 0.00% |
| 8 | 11 | 0.00% |
| 9 | 4 | 0.00% |
| 10+ | 2 | 0.00% |
| **Total** | **2,977,703** | **.** |

**Table 5.2 - Dispenser Counties (Veterinary)**

| Counties | Patients | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 72,566 | 99.63% |
| 2 | 263 | 0.36% |
| 3 | 5 | 0.01% |
| 4 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 5 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 6 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 7 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 8 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 9 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 10+ | 0 | 0.00% |
| **Total** | **72,834** | **.** |

**Exhibit 6: The categories of practitioners prescribing controlled substances and the number of prescriptions authorized by each category of practitioner**

Of the identified specialties, the largest categories for both controlled substance prescriptions and patients are Medical Doctor and Other (Table 6.1 below). These two specialties account for 45% and 49% of all controlled substances prescribed and dispensed. Dentists are the third most frequent prescribers of controlled substances.

Of the identified specialties, Substance Use Disorder[2] and Pain Management provide the highest prescription rate per patient compared to other specialties. Dentists have the lowest rate of prescriptions per patient.

***Table 6.1 – Number of controlled substance prescriptions dispensed by prescriber specialty***

| Specialty | Prescriptions | Patients | Rx per Patient |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dentist | 417,024 | 318,059 | 1.31 |
| Hematology | 3,348 | 841 | 3.98 |
| Medical Doctor | 8,008,696 | 1,593,276 | 5.03 |
| Oncology | 107,445 | 27,277 | 3.94 |
| Pain Management | 296,832 | 52,084 | 5.7 |
| Palliative Care | 30,537 | 7,964 | 3.83 |
| Substance Use Disorder | 37,268 | 5,168 | 7.21 |
| Veterinary | 145,213 | 70,957 | 2.05 |
| Other+ | 8,950,421 | 1,758,039 | 5.09 |
| Unspecified | 60,528 | 19,018 | 3.18 |
| **Total** | **18,057,312** | **3,049,294** | **5.92** |

+Specialty other than those in this list (e.g., Nurse Practitioner, Prescribing Pharmacist, et. al.)
*This is the total of unique patients and differs from the sum of all categories because unique patients may see more than one practitioner specialty.

[2] The classification of Substance Use Disorder specialty contains data from prescriptions dispensed at a pharmacy by a patient and does not include data from Substance Use Treatment services that dispense medications on site or less than 48 hours supply.

Opioids remain the most prescribed and dispensed controlled substance across all specialties except Veterinary. Benzodiazepines and controlled substances with no CDC class are the second and third most prescribed and dispensed controlled substances.

***Table 6.2 – Number of prescriptions dispensed by prescriber specialty and drug class***

| Specialty | Benzo | Opioid | Muscle Relaxant | Stimulant | Sedative | No CDC Class | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dentist | 58,282 | 350,087 | 349 | 477 | 349 | 7,480 | 417,024 |
| Hematology | 281 | 2,597 | 0 | 8 | 100 | 362 | 3,348 |
| Medical Doctor | 1,752,659 | 2,773,085 | 32,236 | 1,124,845 | 638,429 | 1,687,442 | 8,008,696 |
| Oncology | 18,404 | 67,889 | 89 | 2,315 | 3,901 | 14,847 | 107,445 |
| Pain Management | 11,652 | 250,321 | 1,281 | 2,160 | 3,161 | 28,257 | 296,832 |
| Palliative Care | 6,948 | 17,501 | 27 | 366 | 244 | 5,451 | 30,537 |
| Substance Use Disorder | 1,363 | 26,024 | 31 | 3,401 | 167 | 6,282 | 37,268 |
| Veterinary | 17,992 | 32,792 | 5 | 67 | 35 | 94,322 | 145,213 |
| Other+ | 1,696,707 | 3,636,842 | 24,259 | 1,469,959 | 434,966 | 1,687,688 | 8,950,421 |
| Unspecified | 7,933 | 24,494 | 41 | 5,036 | 2,047 | 20,977 | 60,528 |
| **Total** | **3,572,221** | **7,181,632** | **58,318** | **2,608,634** | **1,083,399** | **3,553,108** | **18,057,312** |

^No CDC Class – The Center for Disease Control (CDC) does not have a classification on file for the drug
+Specialty other than those in this list (e.g., Nurse Practitioner, Prescribing Pharmacist, et. al.)

**Summary and Discussion**

In 2019, over 18 million dispensed controlled substance prescriptions were entered into the North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System. The overall number of controlled substances dispensed continues to decline. This report indicates that there have been changes in behavior in prescribing and dispensing in North Carolina. The number of prescribers that patients go to has increased, whilst the number of counties visited for the dispensed medication has decreased.

The North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System was accessed by just over 46,300 practitioners and pharmacists who were able to access prescription histories and other clinical diagnosis tools to assist in prescribing and dispensing decisions. Diagnosis tools available in 2019, included Narxcare, a tool that assesses an individual's risk of an unintentional overdose from prescribed controlled substances. Work will continue in 2020, to increase the number of practitioners and pharmacists accessing the system, with a focus on increasing technical integrations into clinical workflows.