



NORTH POLE
VETERINARY HOSPITAL

2942 Hurst Road • North Pole, AK 99705

January 8th, 2022

Dear Representative Prax,

My wife and I own North Pole Veterinary Hospital. I am the director of business operations for the veterinary hospital.

I am offering you my perspective on the PDMP as a veterinary business owner.

Please understand that the main point I am trying to convey to you is that including veterinarians in the PDMP is completely ineffective in our state as way to fight the opioid epidemic.

Veterinarians are already regulated by the DEA and the Know Your Customer Act, there is no need for strenuous duplicate regulatory processes. We have colleagues in human medicine and the PDMP does work for them, however in does not work for veterinarians.

Veterinarians were included in the PDMP with little thought on why they were included, how including them would be useful in fighting the opioid epidemic or more importantly how they would be able to merge animal patients' information into the human owner's medical information. Nor was it thought out as to what the labor cost to a private veterinary hospital would be in relation to any realized benefit to society of stopping this epidemic.

First, human medicine prescribed 99.66% of all opioids in 2017 in the US. Please understand this number. It means that veterinarians only prescribed .34%. This number has likely gone down even more as our country has come to grips with this epidemic. The problem of prescribing these drugs inappropriately lies squarely in the human medical realm. The human medicine industry has larger revenue compared to veterinary medicine and an enormous staff infrastructure to use the PDMP. In our industry the only revenue generating people in our clinics are the veterinarians and they are the ones spending time using the PDMP. Veterinarians are not human doctors. Their education does not teach them about what drugs or medications are appropriate for humans. When a veterinarian uses the PDMP they do not know what they are looking at as they were not trained in human medicine. It is a waste of time. At our clinic we rarely prescribe these drugs.

Time, money and energy should be spent in the human medical realm. We in the veterinary industry understand that we too are part of a community that is struggling with opioids, however we should not be forced to spend valuable time and money on a misguided program that is completely inappropriate for veterinarians and of no use to our society in the fight of this epidemic. Nor should our profession need to deal with all of the confidentiality issues surrounding human medicine.

Patrick Lovely



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