Morphine Equivalent Daily Dose Policies

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SUMMARY
This dataset includes state-level Morphine Equivalent Daily Dose threshold policies in effect as of June 1, 2017. The dataset contains dose threshold levels and policy characteristics for each policy.

ABOUT MORPHINE EQUIVALENT DAILY DOSE LAWS & THE DATA
Prescription opioid misuse is a significant problem in the United States that has gained considerable national attention in recent years. In particular, between 1999 and 2016 the rate of prescription opioid mortality has more than quadrupled, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Previous research indicates that patients who receive higher doses of prescription opioids have an increased risk of overdose and mortality, leading several states to establish Morphine Equivalent Daily Dose (MEDD) thresholds. MEDD is a measurement that converts opioid prescriptions to their equivalent dose in morphine and divides the total prescription by the number of days the prescription is intended to last, allowing for comparison among different opioid formulations and strengths. MEDD policies set thresholds over which prescribing is restricted in some way. This dataset contains information on threshold levels, policy characteristics, and sponsoring organizations.

Some findings from the dataset include:

- 22 states have enacted 31 MEDD threshold policies. The most common policy structure observed was guideline (13 states) followed by prior authorization (4 states), rule/regulation (4 states), legislative act (3 states), claim denial (2 states), and alert system/automatic patient report (2 states).
- The state-level agencies or organizations responsible for the policies were most frequently the state’s medical board (9 states), workers’ compensation board/agency (5 states), health department (5 states), legislature (3 states), pharmacy board (2 states), and PDMP (2 states) with some state policies being implemented by multiple agencies or organizations.
- A majority of states explicitly excluded certain patient groups from their MEDD policies with the most common exceptions being for terminal/hospice/palliative care patients (12 states), acute/etiologic pain patients (10 states), and cancer/malignant pain patients (8 states).

NAVIGATING THE DATA
There are two ways to navigate the data by clicking the Filter tab or the Explore tab — for each option, the data can be visualized in a map and table format or in jurisdiction profiles.
**Filter**
The dataset homepage will default to the Filter tab. Here, users may answer a series of questions to learn more about the characteristics of the laws. Answering more than one question will show all the jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria. Criteria selected will be listed above the questions, and can be removed by clicking the white X or by clicking “Reset” above the questions.

**Explore**
Users can access Explore by clicking the Explore tab in the bar above the questions. Using Explore, users will see the answers to one question across all jurisdictions.

The primary questions in this dataset are:

1. What is the type of policy?
2. Which state organizations contributed to the policy?
3. What is the MEDD threshold level?
4. Which types of patients are excluded from the policy?
5. Are short courses of opioids excluded from the policy?
6. Under which circumstances may the MEDD threshold be exceeded?

**DISPLAYING THE RESULTS**

There are two display modes once criteria have been selected by using either the Filter or Explore tab — **Map** display mode and **Profiles** display mode.

**Map Display**
LawAtlas.org dataset homepages default to the map display mode. When querying the data using the Filter tab, all jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display in one tone of yellow. Those jurisdictions that do not meet the criteria selected will be colored gray. When querying the data using the Explore tab, the map will illuminate with colors from yellow to red that are associated with the various answer choices (the color-coding is defined by the key to the left of the map).

Below the map, a table will appear. Using the Filter or Explore tab to navigate the questions will change the display:

- Using the Filter tab, you can select an unlimited number of criteria and the applicable jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria will be displayed in the table below.
- Using the Explore tab, you can isolate a single criterion and the applicable jurisdictions will appear in the table below.

**Profiles Display**
The Profiles display presents the results of the criteria selected in a text-based format for each applicable jurisdiction. Using the Filter tab, jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display. Using the Explore tab, jurisdictions that meet the criterion selected will display. If no criteria are selected, the full profiles for each state will appear under both Filter and Explore.

**Profile Legend**
Within each Profile box, above the questions and answers, there are additional options and information useful in exploring the law:

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Toggle Legal Text – Selecting this option will show all the legal text used to answer questions for this jurisdiction.

Toggle Full Place Profile – Selecting this option will show all questions and answers for this jurisdiction, regardless of what was selected using the Filter or Explore tabs.

Toggle Size – Selecting this option will make the profile larger, but will not change the information displayed.

Map and Profile Legend
There are a few symbols to be aware of in both Map and Profiles display modes:

Section Symbol – Clicking this symbol will open a window that displays excerpts from the law that correspond to the question and answer.

Caution Note – Clicking on this symbol will open a small window that displays text that describes important caveats about the question and answer.

DATASET RESOURCES
Each dataset homepage includes the following resources available for download:

- Data: The Data file exports in CSV. format and may contain two tabs. The “Statistical Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset, displayed as values defined in the accompanying Codebook. The “Summary Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset in text form, as well as the accompanying citations and any caution notes that may be included. Note: if there is only one tab available for download it will be the “Statistical Data” as described above.

- Codebook: The Codebook defines all of the coded variables in the dataset. The Codebook lists the question, question type, variable name, variable value and variable label. The Codebook should be used in conjunction with the Statistical Data extract.

- Research Protocol: The Research Protocol is a comprehensive document that outlines the entire methodology of the project, including the scope, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data collection methods, definitions, coding scheme decisions, as well as the quality control process.

- Summary Report: The Summary Report provides a snapshot of important findings from the dataset.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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Related prescription opioid policies that do not meet study inclusion criteria are included in an appendix and are available upon request from the author at Sara_Heins@rand.org, but should not be considered comprehensive.

This collection of laws does not provide legal advice nor does it address enforcement of laws, administrative policies, case law, or any other sources of law. Should you have a specific question about these laws in your state, please contact an attorney in your jurisdiction.