

NCPA: Access to controlled substances often delayed

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(HealthDay)—Most pharmacists report experiencing multiple delays or issues with their controlled substance orders, according to the results of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) Controlled Substances Access Survey.

Members of the NCPA were surveyed in December 2013 regarding pharmacy access to controlled [substances](#). More than 1,000 [community pharmacists](#) responded to the survey, which included an open-ended section to share observations.

According to the report, in the past 18 months, about 75 percent of respondents experienced three or more delays or issues with their controlled substance orders, which were caused by stopped shipments. On average, these delays affected 55 patients per pharmacy. Most pharmacies (89 percent) received no advanced notice of the delay, and

only discovered the delay when their order arrived and included only non-controlled substances. The delays in receiving these medications lasted at least a week for 60 percent of the respondents. The majority of pharmacists (67.9 percent) reported being unable to obtain these substances from an alternate source. As a result, most pharmacies had to turn patients away and refer them to a competitor.

"Vulnerable patients are increasingly and tragically becoming collateral damage in the country's battle against the abuse of prescription drugs, particularly [narcotic painkillers](#)," Douglas Hoey, R.Ph., M.B.A., [chief executive officer](#) of the NCPA, said in a statement.

More information: [More Information](#)

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