Medical Xpress

New study aims to understand opioid fill patterns in children

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A new study describes trends in filled opioid prescriptions by patient and clinical characteristics for Medicaid-enrolled children. Findings from the study will be presented during the Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS) 2019 Meeting, taking place on April 24—May 1 in Baltimore.

"In this retrospective cohort study of Medicaid-enrolled children and young adults (1 to 21 years old) we found that filled opioid prescriptions are relatively rare (1% of all visits) and adjusted rates decreased from 2012 to 2016," said Abbey Masonbrink, MD, MPH, a pediatric hospitalist at Children's Mercy Kansas City and one of the authors of the study. "Providers frequently prescribed opioids combined with non-opioid analgesics and opioids with a black box or safety warning. Future efforts should support development of pediatric pain management guidelines based in a multimodal approach to minimize use of opioids and target reduction of opioids with pediatric safety warnings."

This study involved a retrospective cohort study of children 1 to 21 years old enrolled in Medicaid from 2012-2016 using the IBM Watson Medicaid Marketscan claims database. It defined clinical visits as an "opioid visit" if there was a new opioid prescription filled in a retail pharmacy within seven days of the visit. The opioid visit was then assigned to the clinical provider most likely to have prescribed an opioid. Only visits to providers submitting claims in every year from 2012-2016 were included. Changes in patient and clinical characteristics over time were assessed using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests and logistic

[regression](#) was used to estimate the change in adjusted probability of an opioid visit over time. Due to the large volume of visits analyzed, p