Controlled Drugs Data Collection (CoDDaC)

NSW Ministry of Health

Background

The NSW Controlled Drugs Data Collection (CoDDaC) records details of authorities to prescribe Schedule 8 (S8) drugs, namely opioids, psychostimulants, benzodiazepines and cannabis-based medicines (in circumstances where an authority is required). It draws data from the Electronic Recording and Reporting of Controlled Drugs (ERRCD) system, a 'live' operational system which replaced the Pharmaceutical Drugs of Addiction System (PHDAS) on 4 September 2016. Authorisation is not required in all circumstances, so the data does not reflect all prescribing. Requirements for authorisation have also changed over time.

CoDDaC consists of three subcollections:

Subcollection 1: Opioid Treatment Program (OTP)

Relates to opioid substitution pharmacotherapy provided under the NSW OTP.

Subcollection 2: Other Schedule 8 (S8) Drugs

Relates to authorisation for the prescribing of S8 drugs to individual patients other than those prescribed under the OTP. These include: opioids for the ongoing management of pain; psychostimulants for the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and hypersomnolence disorders such as narcolepsy; the benzodiazepines alprazolam and flunitrazepam for anxiety and insomnia respectively; and cannabis-based medicines. Authorisation is not required in all circumstances, so the data does not reflect all prescribing.

Subcollection 3: Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions

Relates to prescriptions for psychostimulants for the treatment for ADHD in children and adults that are notified as a condition of general authorisation to prescribe psychostimulants for ADHD. The requirement for prescribers to notify the Ministry of such prescriptions has been discontinued and the subcollection ends in May 2016.

Data Custodian

Access to the NSW CoDDaC requires approval from:

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Overview of NSW CoDDaC Subcollections

	Subcollection 1: OTP	Subcollection 2: Other S8 Drugs	Subcollection 3: Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions
Purpose	Contains data relating to opioid substitution pharmacotherapy provided under the NSW OTP, namely methadone and buprenorphine. Before 4 September 2016, this collection was the Methadone Subsystem in PHDAS.	Contains data relating to authorities to prescribe S8 drugs other than those prescribed under the OTP. These include opioids, psychostimulants and the benzodiazepines alprazolam and flunitrazepam, and cannabis-based medicines in circumstances where an authority is required. Before 4 September 2016, this subcollection was the Non-Methadone Subsystem in PHDAS.	Contains data relating to prescriptions for psychostimulants for the treatment of ADHD in children and adults. To study people with ADHD who have been treated or authorised for treatment with psychostimulants, the Other S8 subcollection would be required to obtain complete records on persons with ADHD who have been individually authorised for psychostimulant treatment. Before 4 September 2016, this was the Stimulant Subsystem in PHDAS.
Population	Authorities, patients, prescribers and dosing points (or administration points) participating in the OTP.	Authorities, patients and prescribers relating to authorisation to prescribe S8 drugs other than those used in the OTP. Only information on the generic drug and maximum dose authorised are recorded (in the case of cannabis, information on maximum dose is not recorded, however).	Notifications, patients and prescribers relating to prescriptions of psychostimulants for the treatment of ADHD.
Data collection	Since 1985. Most data items are complete from 1999. Data migration from PHDAS to ERRCD involved some transformation of data, most notably the transformation of 'program' information to 'authority' information. It is believed that this resulted in a minor loss in data quality although detailed assessment has not been conducted.	Since 1985. For psychostimulant-related records, there are two types of psychostimulant approval: • *individual* patient' approval: authorities where the doctor must apply and be given approval before commencing treatment for a particular patient. • a *general* approval: allows doctors to prescribe to certain patients without patient-specific approval. The general approval required monthly notification of prescribing, and these details were captured in the Notified Psychostimulant Prescription subcollection until May 2016. The approval may be a: CNS approval (for paediatricians and child psychiatrists for the treatment of child patients), or an S28c approval (for psychiatrists and neurologists for the	June 1996 to May 2016. Prescribers were required to report prescribing details monthly, and these details were recorded as notified prescriptions. This requirement was discontinued in 2018 and the data is complete up to May 2016. Since then, the CoDDaC has only included a proportion of psychostimulant treatment for ADHD, and these are captured in the Other S8 Drugs subcollection as they relate to individual patient authorisations to prescribe an S8 drug.

	Subcollection 1: OTP	Subcollection 2: Other S8 Drugs	Subcollection 3: Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions
		treatment of adult patients). The CNS approval was introduced in 1996, and the S28c approval was introduced in late 2003.	
Size of collection	As of 30 June 2021, there are 682,350 authorities relating to 68,926 persons.	As of 30 June 2021, there are 404,977 authorities relating to 146,860 persons.	As of 30 June 2021, there are 848,301 records relating to 133,794 persons.
External Reporting	Annual figures (as at 30 June) are published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in the National Opioid Pharmacotherapy Statistics Annual Data (NOPSAD) Collection report.	Nil	Nil
Strengths	Most data items are reliable and complete since approval to prescribe methadone or buprenorphine for an individual patient under the OTP is required from the Ministry. All of these approvals are recorded in ERRCD.	Authority records for psychostimulants together with the records in the Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions subcollection provide a reasonably complete representation of psychostimulant treatment in the community until May 2016. Note though that historical records from PHDAS may also include strength and route.	Psychostimulant records up to May 2016 provide a reasonably complete representation of prescribing for the treatment of ADHD by generally authorised prescribers. General authorisation was introduced for the treatment of ADHD in children in 1996, and in 2003 for the treatment of ADHD in adults.
Limitations	Provision of certain updates from prescribers are not always conducted in a timely manner. For example, the quality of data on dosing points has varied over time. It is recommended that data extraction is performed after 6 to 12 months of exits.	This subcollection only includes details of *granted* authorities. Because authorisation is required only in specific circumstances, they represent only a very small proportion of prescribing of S8 opioids, benzodiazepines or cannabis-based medicines in the community. They therefore have limited analytical value: they can perhaps be used to supplement or cross-check records from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. When using data on authorities, note that the extent to which a person takes their medication for the period over which the doctor has been authorised to prescribe, and the extent to which a person takes medication for the duration of the prescription that is issued is not known. A prescription for a S8 medicine is valid for six months.	Not all people with ADHD are prescribed psychostimulants. When using data on notified prescriptions, note that the extent to which a person takes their medication for the duration of the prescription issued is not known. A prescription for a S8 medicine is valid for six months.

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Data dictionary

Subcollection 1: Opioid Treatment Program (OTP)

Variable	Description	Variable name
Patient's residential postcode	Patient's residential postcode.	Postcode
Patient's birth date	Patient's birth date (year only; year and month only; year, month and day of week only; or date).	DateOfBirth
Patient's sex	Patient's gender.	Gender
Patient's Indigenous status	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status. Data collection commenced in 1999.	IndigenousStatus
Patient's country of birth	Patient's country of birth based on ABS Standard Classification of Countries (SACC).	ABSCountryCode
Patient's preferred language	Patient's preferred language based on ABS Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL). Data collection commenced in March 2013.	ABSLanguageCode
Application type	Two types of OTP application: 'OTP Application Workflow' is for patients applying for maintenance treatment in NSW; 'OTP Temporary Interstate Transfer Application is for patients receiving treatment outside of NSW who are to be dosed in NSW temporarily for a period of less than 1 month.	WorkflowName
Authorised drug	Drug authorised to be prescribed as part of treatment.	DrugName
Transfer jurisdiction (previous state/territory)	Indicates where patient transferred from, where applicable. Described by two variables, depending on OTP Application Type (see above). Data collection commenced in January 1999.	State_TransferFrom (applicable to OTP Application Workflow), Interstate_TransferFrom (applicable to OTP Temporary Interstate Transfer Application)
Primary opioid drug of dependence (12 variables)	Patient's primary opioid drug of dependence, as indicated on application for authority to prescribe. Each drug is indicated by a separate variable. Data collection commenced in January 2012. Previous variable value is not carried over to a new authority issued to a patient, such as in a transfer of care from one prescriber to another.	PrimaryDrug_Heroin, PrimaryDrug_Morphine, PrimaryDrug_Oxycodone, PrimaryDrug_Codeine, PrimaryDrug_Buprenorphine, PrimaryDrug_Hydromorphone, PrimaryDrug_Fentanyl, PrimaryDrug_Methadone, PrimaryDrug_Pethidine, PrimaryDrug_InadequatelyDescribed, PrimaryDrug_NotStated, PrimaryDrug_Other

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Variable	Description	Variable name
Other drug(s) of concerns (19 variables)	Patient's other drug(s) of concern, as indicated on application for authority to prescribe. Each drug is indicated by a separate variable. Data collection commenced in January 1999.	NoOtherDrugsOfConcern, OtherDrug_AnabolicAgents, OtherDrug_Alcohol, OtherDrug_Amphetamines, OtherDrug_Benzodiazepines, OtherDrug_Cannabinoids, OtherDrug_Cocaine, OtherDrug_MDMA, OtherDrug_OtherDrugsOfConcern, OtherDrug_NonOpioidAnalgesic, OtherDrug_SedativesHypnotics, OtherDrug_Ketamine, OtherDrug_Methamphetamine, OtherDrug_Nicotine, OtherDrug_VolatileSolvents, OtherDrug_Stimulants, OtherDrug_Hallucinogens, OtherDrug_Missing, OtherDrug_Text
Authority start date	An authority is issued when treatment is started or re-started after a period of absence. An authority is also issued when there is a change in prescriber, drug, or authorised maximum dose. Each authority issued has a start date.	AuthStartDate
Authority expiry date	Date on which authority expires. Generally, only authorities issued for interstate applications (the 'OTP Temporary Interstate Transfer') are issued with an expiry date.	AuthExpDate
Authority cancellation date	Date on which authority is cancelled. Variable is populated when a patient exits treatment.	AuthCancDate
Maximum dose authorised	Maximum dose of authorised drug. Measured in mg.	MaxDose
Start dose	These are historical details of the start dose migrated from PHDAS. It should only be populated for the first authority in a sequential and contiguous sequence, but this is not the case. For analysis purposes, only the value in the first authority of a contiguous sequence should be considered. Collection commenced in January 1999. Note that the starting dosage may not reflect actual dosage for OTP patients for all prescriptions under the authority.	StartingDose

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Variable	Description	Variable name
Prescriber ID	Unique prescriber identifier.	HealthProfessionalID
Prescriber sector	The sector in which the prescriber practices. The variable is derived from other two variables, practice type and administration point sector. A high proportion are 'unknown'.	Prescriber_Sector
Prescriber practice ID	Unique prescriber practice identifier.	BusinessID
Practice type	Type of practice. A high proportion are 'unknown'.	PracticeType
Practice postcode	Refers to street address generally but may refer to postal address.	Postcode
Date on which patient commenced being dosed at a particular administration point	There is a high degree of unreliability for details of a patient's administration point for start dates prior to 2000.	StartDate
Date on which patient finished being dosed at a particular dosing point	See above.	EndDate
Administration (dosing) point ID	Unique administration (dosing) point identifier.	BusinessID
Administration point sector	Section the administration point is in.	OTPDosingPointSector
Administration point type	Type of administration point.	OTPDosingPointType
Administration point postcode	Postcode of administration point.	Postcode
Reason patient ended program (as of current)	Indicates why the patient ended treatment but also helps with determining if the treatment was discrete or part of a sequence of treatment periods.	NSWExitReason
Last dosage on ending program	Data collection commenced in January 1999.	ExitDosage

Subcollection 2: Other Schedule 8 (S8) Drugs

Variable	Description	Variable name
Patient's residential postcode	Patient's residential postcode.	Postcode
Patient's birth date	Patient's birth date (year only; year and month only; year, month and day of week only; or date).	DateOfBirth
Patient's sex	Patient's gender.	Gender
Patient's patient diagnosed health problem(s)	ICD-10-AM code. Not applicable for authorities issued for cannabis medicines.	DiagnosisID
Authority start date	Date on which authority is active.	AuthStartDate
Authority expiry date	Date on which authority expires.	AuthExpDate
Authority cancellation date	Date on which authority is cancelled. Variable is populated when a patient exits treatment.	AuthCancDate

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Variable	Description	Variable name
Authorised drug(s)	Drug authorised to be prescribed as part of treatment and may contain the drug form and strength. The specific drug authorised is not recorded in most cases for cannabis medicines.	DrugName
Maximum dose authorised	Measured in mg. Data collection commenced on September 2016. Prior to this, the 'Directions' variable was used exclusively to express the maximum authorised dose. Some authorities may have both maximum dose and directions. Not applicable for authorities issued for cannabis medicines.	MaxDose
Directions for authorised drug(s)	Entered as an alternate to 'Maximum dose authorised' where applicable. In free text and therefore there is wide variability in the style and format of the content. Not applicable for authorities issued for cannabis medicines	Directions
Prescriber specialty	Only one specialty is recorded at any one time and specialty may change over time such that it may be different from the one at the time of authorisation.	SpecialtyRole
Practice type	Type of practice. A high proportion of 'unknown'.	PracticeType

Subcollection 3: Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions

Variable	Description	Variable name
Patient's residential postcode	Patient's residential postcode.	Postcode
Patient's birth date	Patient's birth date (year only; year and month only; year, month and day of week only; or date).	DateOfBirth
Patient's sex	Patient's gender.	Gender
Date of prescription	Date drug was prescribed.	DatePrescribed
Drug prescribed	Drug prescribed.	DrugName
Dose prescribed	Measured in mg.	DailyDose
Prescriber specialty	Only one specialty is recorded at any one time and specialty may change over time such that it may be different from the one at the time of prescription.	SpecialtyRole

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Appendix – Code List

Subcollection 1: Opioid Treatment Program (OTP)

Variable	Values
Patient's sex	Male
	Female
Patient's Indigenous status	1 - Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
	2 - Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
	3 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
	4 - Not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
Patient's country of birth	Refer to ABS Standard Classification of Countries (SACC
Patient's Preferred language	Refer to ABS Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)
Application type	OTP Application
	OTP Temporary Interstate Transfer
Authorised drug	methadone
	buprenorphine
	methadone and buprenorphine
Transfer jurisdiction (of previous state and territory, in two variables)	ACT
	NSW
	NT
	QLD
	SA
	TAS
	VIC
	WA
	(Blank)
Primary opioid drug of dependence (12 variables)	FALSE (No)
	TRUE (Yes)
Other drug(s) of concerns (19 variables)	FALSE (No)
	TRUE (Yes)
Prescriber sector	Justice Health
	Private
	Public
	Other
	Unknown
Practice type	Aboriginal health service
	Community drug and alcohol service
	Community health care services
	Community mental health service
	Correctional services
	Hospital
	Opioid pharmacotherapy clinic
	Private practice
	Residential health care facility
	Other
	Unknown
	Unknown/inadequately described/not stated
	(Blank)
Administration point sector	Justice Health
	Private
	Public
	Other
	Unknown
Administration point type	Adult Correctional Centre
	Clinic
	Community Pharmacy
	Doctor's Surgery
	Juvenile Justice Centre
	Hospital Inpatients Only
	Hospital Other
	Hospital Pharmacy
	Interstate Community Pharmacy
	Non-Government Organisation
	Prescriber Practice
	unknown
	(Blank)
	Change of Drug

Variable	Values
Reason patient ended program (as of current)	Continuation
	Exited from jail – data clean up
	Patient ceased to pick up
	Patient deceased
	Patient did not commence
	Patient successfully completed
	Reason not given
	Transferred to another prescriber
	Transferred to Justice Health system
	Treatment incomplete
	Treatment terminated involuntarily
	Other
	(Blank)

Subcollection 2: Other Schedule 8 (S8) Drugs

Variable	Values
Patient's sex	Male
	Female
Prescriber specialty	Addiction Medicine
	Anaesthesia
	Approved Other Prescriber
	Dermatology
	General Practice
	General Practitioner (non specialist)
	Medical Administration
	Obstetrics and Gynaecology
	Opthamology
	OTP Registrar
	Paediatric Registrar
	Paediatrics and Child Health
	Paediatrics and Child Health - Neurology
	Pain Medicine
	Palliative Medicine
	Pathology
	Physician
	Physician - Clinical Pharmacologist
	Physician - General Medicine
	Physician - Medical Oncology
	Physician - Neurology
	Physician - Respiratory and Sleep Medicine
	Physician - Rheumatology
	Psychiatric Registrar
	Psychiatry
	Psychiatry - Child and Adolescent
	Radiation Oncology
	Registered Nurse - Nursing Practitioner
	Rehabilitation Medicine
	Sexual Health Medicine
	Surgery
	Surgery - Urology
	Unknown
	(Blank)
Practice type	Aboriginal health service
	Community drug and alcohol service
	Community health care services
	Community mental health service
	Correctional services
	Hospital
	Opioid pharmacotherapy clinic
	Private practice
	Residential health care facility
	Other
	Unknown
	Unknown/inadequately described/not stated
	(Blank)

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Subcollection 3: Notified Psychostimulant Prescriptions

Variable	Values
Patient's sex	Male
	Female
Drug prescribed	Dexamfetamine
	Lisdexamfetamine
	Methylphenidate
Prescriber specialty	Approved Other Prescriber
	General Practice
	General Practitioner (non specialist)
	Paediatrics and Child Health
	Paediatrics and Child Health - Neurology
	Pain Medicine
	Psychiatry
	Psychiatry - Child and Adolescent
	(Blank)

Patient's sex	Male
	Female
Drug prescribed	

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