Multidoctoring Encyclopedia Article

Multidoctoring

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Multidoctoring

Multidoctoring, or double-doctoring, is the practice of obtaining medications from more than one physician without informing the other physician(s) involved of any medication already prescribed. Almost always, the medications involved are PSYCHOACTIVE medications, which may then be abused or misused. Individuals who engage in this behavior may be obtaining the medication for their own use or for the purpose of diverting it to sell on the street. People who seek drugs for the purpose of selling them on the street are often very convincing in their appeals and can get the physician to prescribe the particular drug they are after without even mentioning it by name. In Canada and the United States, legislation prohibits people from acquiring a narcotic prescription without informing the physician of other narcotics that have already been for them prescribed that month. Failure to do so results in criminal charges. Physicians can record a patient's response to the question about other prescribed narcotics, and psychoactive drugs in general, as a means of discouraging multidoctoring.

Physicians themselves may be involved at various levels in multidoctoring and the diversion of drugs to the street. These are the physicians termed "script doctors," who willfully prescribe controlled substances to people seeking them, or who prescribe them as a result of being misled or simply uniformed about the prevalence of multidoctoring and the substances involved. Educating the public regarding the risks of prescription-medication abuse and increasing the skills of physicians in recognizing patients engaged in multidoctoring will help to decrease the diversion and misuse of prescription drugs.

See Also

Controls: Scheduled Drugs; Iatrogenic Addiction)

Bibliography

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