

Florida Electronic Prescribing Annual Report for 2022

**FLORIDA CENTER FOR HEALTH INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY
AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION**

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Introduction

The 2022 Florida Electronic Prescribing Report is submitted to meet the Agency for Health Care Administration's (Agency) requirement in section 408.0611, Florida Statutes, to annually report on the status of eprescribing in Florida. This report presents a review of Agency activities to promote eprescribing, highlights of state and national eprescribing initiatives, Florida eprescribing metrics, and action steps to be undertaken to promote greater adoption of eprescribing across the state.

Eprescribing enables the electronic transmission of prescriptions, provides access to medication formulary and adverse medication interactions as well as access to a patient's medication history by prescribing physicians at the point of care. Properly used, it improves prescription accuracy, increases patient safety, and supports medication adherence. Physician access to patients' medication history through electronic health records and other eprescribing systems enables the practitioner to be aware of other medications ordered and to improve coordination of patient care with other treating physicians. The adoption of eprescribing continues to increase in Florida as the benefits and cost-savings for all participants, including physicians, pharmacies, and patients, have become more evident.

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Section 1. Status of Electronic Prescribing

Section 408.0611, Florida Statutes, states that the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) is to collaborate with stakeholders to create an electronic prescribing (eprescribing) clearinghouse, coordinate with private sector eprescribing initiatives, and prepare an annual report on the progress of eprescribing implementation in Florida. The first annual report was published in January 2008. Previous reports are available at: [Florida ePrescribing Metrics and Reports \(myflorida.com\)](https://myflorida.com).

This Florida Electronic Prescribing Annual Report provides a general assessment of the status of eprescribing in Florida in 2022. The report provides monthly metrics on eprescribing in Florida as available through the end of 2022, based on data provided by national eprescribing networks and Florida Medicaid. It concludes with a review of Agency strategies to promote eprescribing in 2023.

1.1. What is Electronic Prescribing?

Electronic prescribing (eprescribing) uses health information technology to enable the electronic transmission of prescriptions and access to medication formularies, drug interactions, and medication histories by prescribing physicians at the point of care. Eprescribing improves prescription accuracy, increases patient safety, and reduces costs because of the critical health information it makes available to the physician or other prescribing practitioner. A major benefit of the electronic transfer of prescriptions is the elimination of errors caused by miscommunication commonly associated with handwritten paper prescriptions. Eprescribing can also reduce opportunities for fraud and abuse that currently occur due to a lack of secure prescription delivery to the pharmacy. Eprescribing creates a more traceable trail for auditing purposes.

Eprescribing systems are a form of health information exchange that integrates prescribed medication data from multiple stakeholders including pharmacy benefit managers (PBM), payers, and pharmacies. Through these systems, medication histories are available for prescriptions that were brought to the pharmacy on paper or transmitted electronically. Eprescribing systems enable practitioners with authorized access and consent to view medication history information at the point of care for coordination of patient drug therapy and improved quality. Eprescribing systems also provide practitioners with a secure means of electronically accessing health plan formulary information and patient eligibility at the point of care.

Pharmacy networks connect pharmacies, physicians, and PBMs. The major pharmacy network in the United States is Surescripts, with 21.7 billion network transactions annually. The Network Alliance grew larger and exchanged more health intelligence than ever in 2022. Surescripts collects and provides data to the Agency for the metrics displayed in this report.

More information about available eprescribing products can be found on the Surescripts website at www.surescripts.com.

1.2. Electronic Prescribing Metrics and Trends

The Agency published a set of indicators to track eprescribing adoption rates in Florida. Surescripts provided a month-by-month total for new prescriptions, refill prescriptions (adjusted for duplicates), and e-Prescribers for Florida in 2022.

A dashboard of key metrics to track eprescribing adoption rates in Florida is published at [Florida ePrescribing Metrics and Reports \(myflorida.com\)](https://myflorida.com). These metrics enable the Agency to compare progress in Florida with national rates. Specific metrics include:

- Counts and comparisons of new and refill eprescriptions
- Eprescribing percentages by quarter and annually
- Eprescriptions transmitted per prescriber
- Estimated percentage of licensed prescribers who are eprescribing
- Electronic requests for Medicaid medication records

The **eprescribing rate** is defined as the number of prescriptions electronically transmitted relative to the estimated number of all prescriptions that could have been eprescribed. The annual eprescribing rate in Florida at the end of 2022 was 80.5 percent.

The **eprescriber rate** represents the number of prescribers who transmit prescriptions electronically relative to the number of medical doctors, osteopathic physicians, podiatric physicians, dentists, physician assistants and APRNs residing in Florida with clear/active licenses to prescribe. Florida's eprescriber rate at the end of 2022 was 45.3 percent.

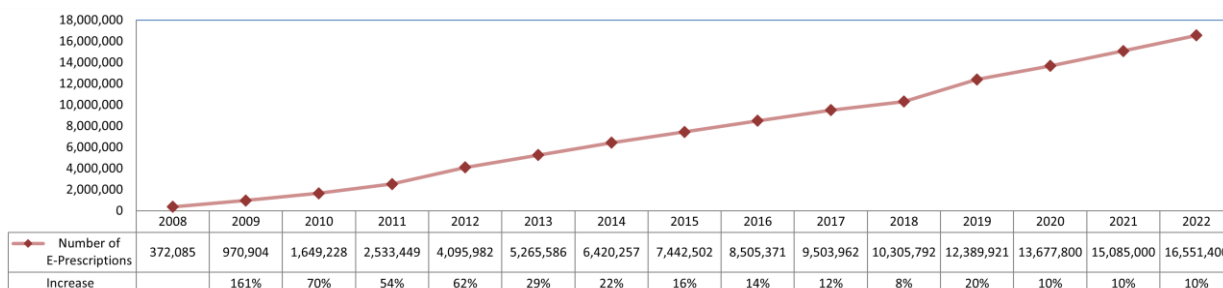
Quarterly eprescribing rates and other metrics are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Florida Quarterly Eprescribing Metrics

Florida Quarterly ePrescribing Metrics	Previous Year Comparison Quarter 4 2021	Quarter 1 2022	Quarter 2 2022	Quarter 3 2022	Quarter 4 2022
End of Quarter ePrescriptions	15,200,900	17,146,300	16,689,200	15,328,100	17,042,000
End of Quarter ePrescribers	71,700	72,667	73,467	75,233	77,633
Change in ePrescriptions Compared to Prior Quarter:	4.0%	11.3%	-2.7%	-8.2%	11.2%
Change in ePrescribers Compared to Prior Quarter:	2.5%	1.4%	1.1%	2.7%	2.9%
End of Quarter ePrescribing Rate ¹ :	89.1%	83.9%	81.6%	75%	83.4%
End of Quarter ePrescriptions per ePrescriber*:	212	236	227	203	219

The average number of eprescriptions per month continually increased, as shown in Figure 1 below, from 372,085 in 2008 to 16,551,400 in 2022. If this trend continues at a consistent rate, forecasts through the end of 2023 project that more than 17 million eprescriptions will be processed in Florida each month.

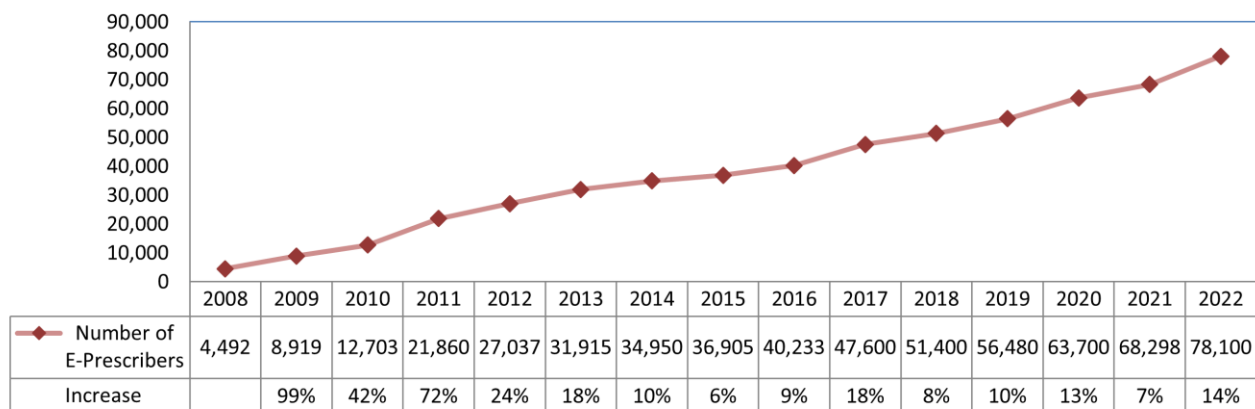
Figure 1. Annual Increase of Electronic Prescriptions 2008 – 2022



¹ Based on est. 204,693,000 denominator/12 months for 2021 and 245,341,193 denominator/12 months for 2022

The average number of eprescribers increased from 4,492 in 2008 to 78,100 in December 2022 as shown in Figure 2 below. If this trend continues, the number of eprescribers in Florida is projected to be over 80,000 by the end of 2023.

Figure 2. Annual Increase of Electronic Prescribers 2008 - 2022



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Figure 3 below presents Florida’s eprescribing transactions and active eprescribers at the end of quarters in 2022, as reported by Surescripts. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2022, 17,042,000 eprescriptions were written. The totals include the number of new and refill eprescriptions.

Figure 3. Number of Electronic Prescribers and New and Refill Electronic Prescriptions in Florida, through 2022

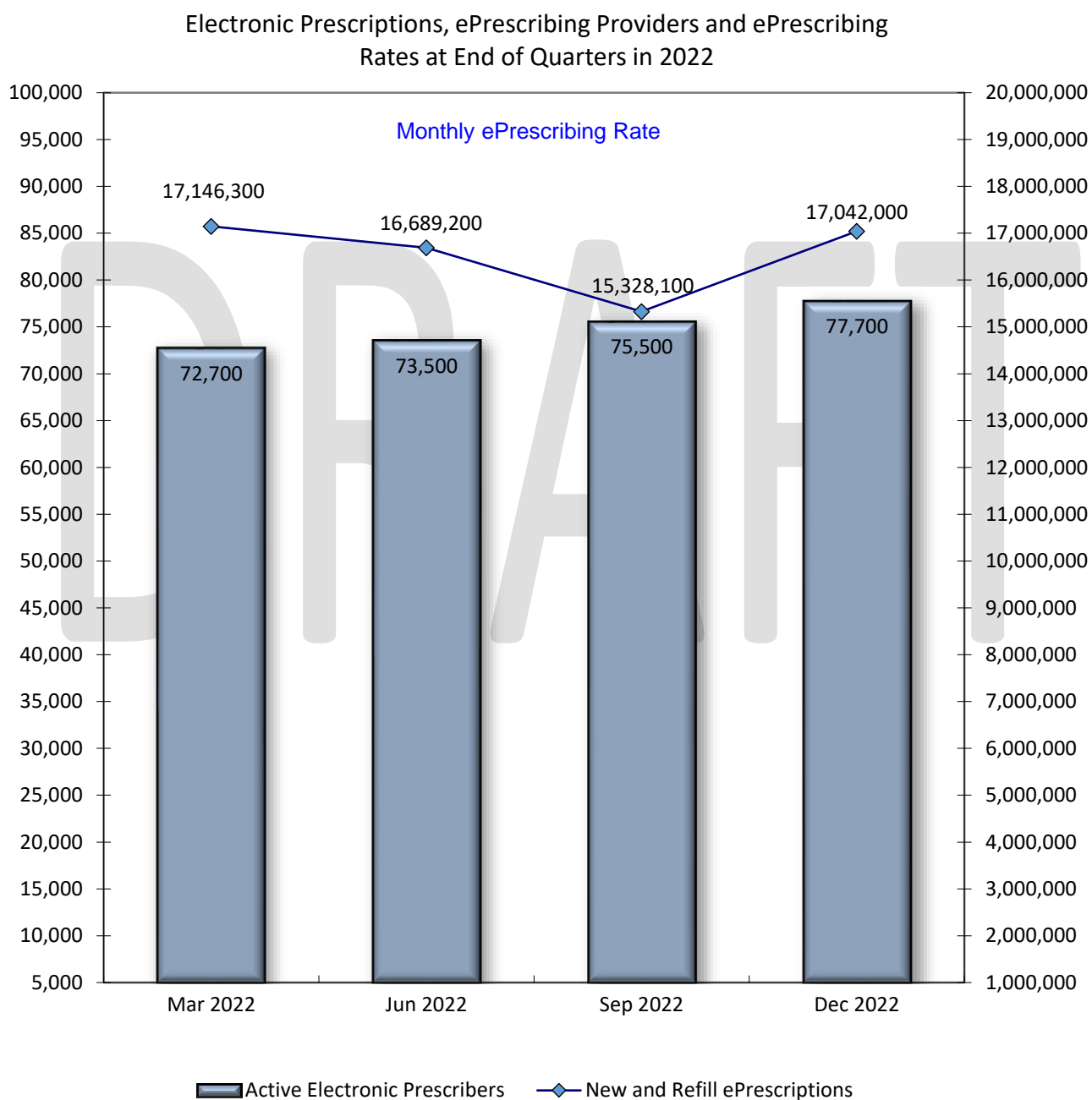
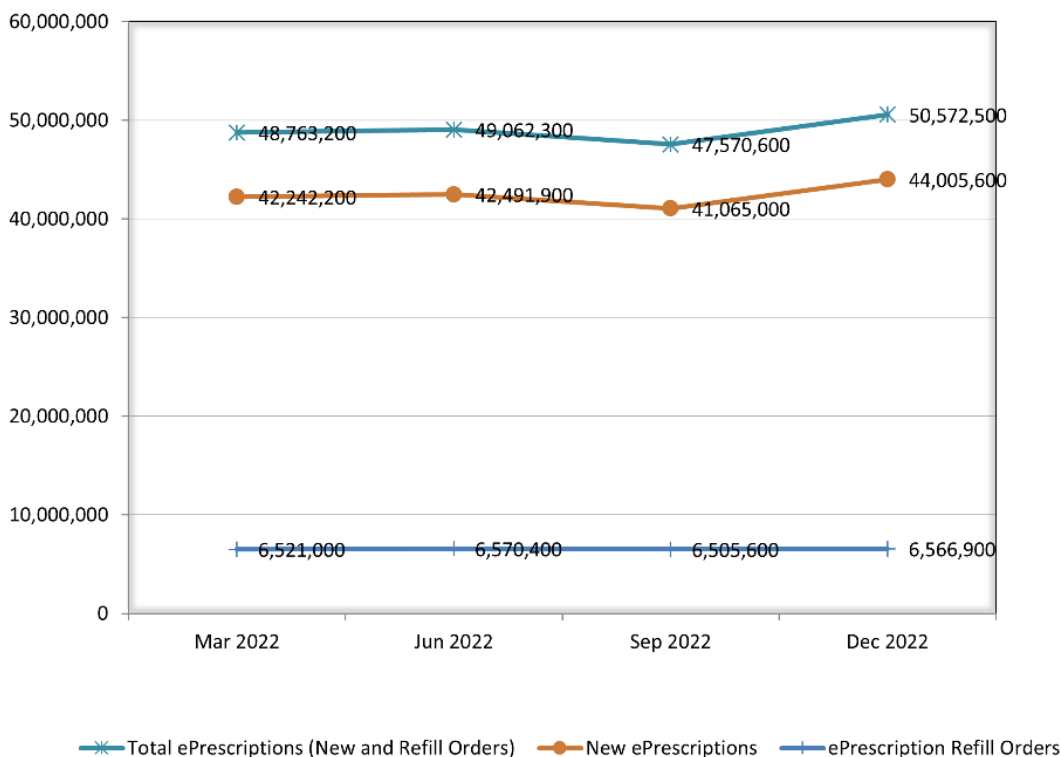


Figure 4 below shows a comparison of the number of new eprescriptions and refill eprescriptions.

Figure 4. Comparison of Eprescribing Activity by New and Refills, End of Quarters in 2022



Section 2. Electronic Prescribing Adoption Activities

2.1. Florida Electronic Prescribing Clearinghouse

Section 408.0611, Florida Statutes, was passed into law during the 2007 Legislative Session. It requires the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) to create a clearinghouse of eprescribing information, which was made available on the Agency's website in October 2007. The purpose of the Electronic Prescribing Clearinghouse is to report eprescribing trends and provide information to promote the implementation of eprescribing by health care practitioners, health care facilities, and pharmacies in an effort to prevent prescription drug abuse, improve patient safety, and reduce unnecessary prescriptions. The Florida Electronic Prescribing Clearinghouse can be accessed at: [Florida Electronic Prescribing \(ePrescribing\) Clearinghouse \(myflorida.com\)](http://myflorida.com). Information about nationally certified health IT products and eprescribing tools, can be found on the companion website, <http://ahca.myflorida.com/medicaid/ehr>.

2.2. Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances

Until 2010, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) regulations required prescriptions for controlled substances to be written on a paper prescription pad. On March 29, 2010, the DEA issued an interim final rule permitting eprescribing of controlled substances (EPCS). The rules specify system requirements related to identity proofing; access control; and auditing for prescribing practitioners and other registrants, eprescribing vendors, pharmacies and pharmacists, and others. Federal changes to rule COMS-4180-F clarifies that providers must use eprescribing for Medicare part D Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substances on or before January 1, 2021.

In 2023, Surescripts published their 2022 National Progress Report at [2022-national-progress-report.pdf \(surescripts.com\)](#). The report determined 35 states had enacted legislation that mandates the use of e-prescribing for all prescriptions, all controlled substance prescriptions, or a subset of controlled substance prescriptions, typically those for opioids. At the end of 2022, 95.9 percent of Florida pharmacies were enabled for EPCS and 66.8 percent of Florida prescribers were enabled for EPCS. Surescripts metrics on EPCS in Florida may be viewed at [Florida ePrescribing Metrics and Reports \(myflorida.com\)](#). More information about engaging in EPCS is available on the Surescripts website at: <https://surescripts.com/enhanceprescribing/eprescribing/eprescribing-for-controlled-substances/>.

2.3. Pharmacy e-Health Information Technology Collaborative

The Pharmacy Health Information Technology Collaborative (Collaborative) works toward the greater participation of pharmacists in Health Information Exchange (HIE) and addresses opportunities for pharmacists to access and contribute to the patient specific information in EHRs. A key objective of the collaborative is to identify the minimum data set and functional EHR requirements for the delivery, documentation, and billing of pharmacist-provided medication management services. Such requirements include access to key medical information such as laboratory data and bi-directional communication flow among all practitioners.

In 2020, the Collaborative released its revised strategic plan, [2020-2025 Federal Health IT Strategic Plan](#). The plan contains four goals:

- Promote Health and Wellness
- Enhance the Delivery and Experience of Care
- Build a Secure, Data-Driven Ecosystem to Accelerate Research and Innovation
- Connect Healthcare with Health Data

Pharmacy value sets were previously distributed by a PDF document and now are accessible through a database published in the Value Set Authority Center at <https://vsac.nlm.nih.gov/> on the U.S. National Library of Medicine website.

2.4. Electronic Prescribing Standards and Certification Bodies

The EHR certification final rule, issued October 16, 2015, by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology established standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria for EHRs and requires use of the National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) SCRIPT as the only content exchange standard for eprescribing in the ambulatory and inpatient settings. The rule requires the capacity to use the vocabulary standard RxNorm, specifically RxNorm concept unique identifiers (RXCUIs).²

In June 2022, the NCPDP Foundation awarded a grant to University of Arizona R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy to research and identify barriers to using the clinical indication (SNOMED CT) or diagnosis (ICD-10) fields in NCPDP's SCRIPT and Telecommunication Standards, which can aid pharmacists in drug utilization review, and improve patient care and patient safety.³

The NCPDP SCRIPT Standard Implementation Guide and Standards Matrix was updated in 2018. The Standards Matrix showing the status of guide updates may be viewed at <http://www.ncdp.org/NCPDP/media/pdf/StandardsMatrix.pdf>.

In December 2022, the NCPDP published [SCRIPT Implementation Recommendations](#). The publication provides requirements and implementation best practices when transmitting NCPDP SCRIPT transactions. It also contains corrections and clarifications to the NCPDP SCRIPT Implementation Guide.

2.5. Health Information Exchange Coordinating Committee

The Agency established the Health Information Exchange Coordinating Committee (HIECC) in 2007 under the State Consumer Health Information and Policy Advisory Council (Advisory Council) as authorized in Section 408.05 (8) Florida Statutes. The HIECC includes representatives of hospitals, long-term care facilities, medical associations, regional health information exchanges, clinicians, health plans, rural health organizations, economic development organizations, consumer

² Department of Health and Human Services. "2015 Edition Health Information Technology (Health IT) Certification Criteria, 2015 Edition Base Electronic Health Record (EHR) Definition, and ONC Health IT Certification Program Modifications", <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/10/16/2015-25597/2015-edition-health-information-technology-health-it-certification-criteria-2015-edition-base#t-22>, October 16, 2015

³ NCPDP Foundation, "NCPDP Foundation Awards Grant to University of Arizona R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy to Identify Barriers to Using Indication/Diagnosis Fields in NCPDP Standards", [Foundation-PR-UA-Grant-062722.pdf \(ncdpfoundation.org\)](#), June 27, 2022.

organizations, and a representative of the Florida Pharmacy Association. This legislation also requires the Agency to create the Electronic Prescribing Clearinghouse website.

The HIECC advises the Agency in implementing a strategy to establish privacy-protected, secure, and integrated exchange of electronic health records among physicians involved in patient care including the exchange of medication information through eprescribing.

The HIECC and Advisory Council continue to monitor progress in eprescribing adoption and the Agency's strategies to promote eprescribing. Meeting information is provided at <http://fhin.net/committeesAndCouncils/hiecc.shtml> and <http://ahca.myflorida.com/SCHS/CommitteesCouncils/SCHIP/chismetings.shtml>

2.6. Action Steps

In 2023, the Agency will address the following action steps to further accelerate the adoption of eprescribing in Florida:

- 1) Continue to report eprescribing metrics and include Florida Medicaid medication history statistics as available. The information will be posted on the Agency's website as part of the Florida Electronic Prescribing Clearinghouse.
- 2) Support national standards for "fully informed" eprescribing that require health plans and vendors to electronically transmit medication history, formulary, and benefit information to eprescribers and pharmacies.
- 3) Identify and promote opportunities for the participation of pharmacists in Health Information Exchange (HIE) and work with pharmacists to identify HIE opportunities.
- 4) Continue to disseminate eprescribing information to the public. The Agency will include eprescribing information for consumers on the web at www.floridahealthfinder.com.

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