

enforcement and education services to regulated businesses (i.e., pharmacies) and individuals (i.e., pharmacists). In addition, state law enforcement agencies partner with the DEA to help the DEA execute its Pharmaceutical Drug Take-Back Day.

The state departments of public safety are very busy. They are known for their efforts in issuing driver's licenses, AMBER alerts, highway patrols, vehicle inspections, and many other activities. However, the two state department of public safety representatives I spoke with both said their efforts with pharmaceutical drugs, and especially controlled substances, are very high priorities. The one in the Northeast told me that the abuse of controlled substances leads to other crimes, from armed robbery to identity theft, to fund the addicts' habits. The one in the Southwest said the abuse of pharmaceutical drugs was directly interrelated with armed robbery, identity theft, prostitution, and especially border security from a supply standpoint.

State Medical Boards

The state medical boards approve and license physicians, physician assistants, acupuncturists, surgical assistants, and physicians-in-training. These state medical boards process the applications of practitioners and nonprofit entities to determine whether they meet all the criteria to practice or operate in their respective states. Applicants must graduate from appropriate educational institutions, pass national exams, pass the appropriate state exam, and possess good professional character. Two state boards that I contacted said they do extensive background checks, and disqualify applicants for felonies and other offenses that demonstrate poor professional character.

This is important, because as we stated earlier in the book, it all starts with a prescription. Physicians prescribe medicines (compounded, controlled substances, and others) that can provide patients needed help or could be deadly if abused or used recreationally. From pill mills to Internet pharmacies, a bad physician can do a lot of damage if he or she misuses the license he or she has from a state medical board.

I know one lady who is a recovering alcoholic and has not had a drink in 30+ years. She has made it her life's work to help other alcoholics. She visits a local hospital weekly, where she counsels doctors and nurses who are alcoholics. Some of the doctors are also drug users. Their habits cost a fortune. These doctors are very vulnerable to misusing their privileges