

OxyContin maker knows docs who overprescribe

By Scott Glover and Lisa Girion, Los Angeles Times

Over the last decade, the maker of the potent painkiller OxyContin has compiled a database of hundreds of doctors suspected of recklessly prescribing its pills to addicts and drug dealers, but has done little to alert law enforcement or medical authorities.

Despite its suspicions, Purdue Pharma continued to profit from prescriptions written by these physicians, many of whom were prolific prescribers of OxyContin. The company has sold more than \$27 billion worth of the drug since its introduction in 1996.

Purdue has promoted the idea that the country's epidemic of prescription drug deaths was fueled largely by pharmacy robberies, doctor-shopping patients and teens raiding home medicine cabinets. The database suggests that Purdue has long known that physicians also play a significant role in the crisis.

Purdue's database, which contains the names of more than 1,800 doctors, could provide leads for investigators at a time when they are increasingly looking at how reckless prescribing of painkillers contributes to addiction and death.

Purdue has said little about the list since it began identifying doctors in 2002.

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