Drug Diversion

Drug diversion is the illegal distribution or abuse of prescription drugs for purposes not intended by the prescriber.

Types of Drug Diversion:
Selling Prescription Drugs
Doctor Shopping
Illegal Internet Pharmacies
Drug Theft
Prescription Pad Theft
Prescription Pad Forgery
Illicit Prescribing

Vet Shopping
Soliciting multiple veterinarians using a variety of false pretenses to receive prescriptions for controlled substances.
How to recognize a veterinarian shopper?

- New patients bringing in seriously injured animals.
- Old, incomplete or missing veterinary care records.
- Describing symptoms that are inconsistent with the exam
- Describing signs and symptoms requiring specific medications
- Requesting medications by name (like Tramadol or Xanax)
- Refusing specific medications
- Requesting early refills of medication
- Claiming medications were lost or stolen.
- Requesting refills while missing appointments
- Aggressive pet owners

Practices to minimize drug diversion:

- Thorough documentation when prescribing narcotics.
- Protecting access to prescription pads
- Maintaining strict refill policies
- Asking patients to return unused portions of ineffective medication
- Minimizing the use of medication often used to treat people
- Looking for signs of abuse during physical examinations
- Contacting police when veterinarians see suspicious behavior

Documented case in Fairfax County: (Summer of 2016)

Dog owner brought his ten-year-old Boxer to six different veterinarians for treatment.

Dog owner reported the following symptoms:
- Separation anxiety
- Fear of thunderstorms
- Chewing trim of flooring
- Urinating on pillows

Pet owner also reported that the dog was in pain from a dislocated kneecap.

Owner received Xanax and Tramadol from multiple veterinarians during the same period of time. He also received early refills. The owner was charged with Prescription Fraud