

16710 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

These figures are contrasted with propoxyphene which is implicated in 15 deaths per million prescriptions dispensed.

Propoxyphene mentions from DAWN hospital emergency rooms show that approximately 115 ER mentions occur per million prescriptions dispensed. By comparison, for diazepam, another Schedule IV drug and the drug most often involved in DAWN ER reports, there are 386 mentions per million prescriptions dispensed.

A significant question, and one that has a great bearing on the outcome of the pending petitions, is "Has placing propoxyphene in Schedule IV as of March 1977 had an impact on its abuse?" With respect to DAWN ER mentions, I can point to a statistically significant decrease since that time.*

At the present time, there is insufficient data with respect to DAWN ME reports to allow one to make a comparable claim. It will be another six to nine months before the 1978 data is completed.

Also worth noting is the diversion problem, or more precisely, the lack of one. While there has been some diversion of propoxyphene through thefts from registrants, it does not appear to be a preferred drug by thieves. This

* See pages 17 and 18 for specific data.