



# OSAM- O- GRAM



DATE: June 2007

DATELINE: Ohio

Wright State University & the University of Akron

## Emerging Reports about Seroquel® Abuse in the OSAM Network Areas

In 2006, the OSAM Network received from the Cincinnati area its first reports about the abuse of Seroquel® (quetiapine fumarate). In 2007, the abuse of Seroquel® was reported in the Akron, Dayton and Toledo areas. Consequently, it appears that abuse of Seroquel® is an emerging drug abuse trend.

Seroquel®, an atypical anti-psychotic medication, received its first approval in 1997 for the treatment of schizophrenia. In 2004, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Seroquel® to treat manic episodes of bipolar disorder. In 2006, Seroquel® was approved for the treatment of depression associated with bipolar disorder, and became the first therapy approved by the FDA to treat both the manic and depressive symptoms of the mood disorder. Seroquel® is not classified as a controlled substance, and is sometimes prescribed off-label for anxiety and sleep disorders.

According to the OSAM Network focus groups, Seroquel® is typically abused for its sedative properties, which, according to users, is comparable to benzodiazepines. Reported street availability of Seroquel® ranged from low to medium. According to users, Seroquel® has a lower street value than benzodiazepines, and sells for \$1-3 per 100 milligram tablet. A 33-year-old man from Dayton, who used cocaine HCl and pharmaceuticals, commented:

**Participant:** *I know people now that are sellin' them... the Seroquel [tablets]. They get them from their therapist. They are sellin' pretty good. They are just as good as Xanax.*

**Interviewer:** *How much are they selling for?*

**Participant:** *Oh, they sell for \$2-3.*

According to users, Seroquel® is typically abused in combination with alcohol to enhance its sedative effects. Similar to benzodiazepines, Seroquel® tablets are also used to "come down" off a crack cocaine high. Seroquel® is frequently prescribed in prisons as a sedative, and its abuse has been reported by users and probation officers as common among previously incarcerated individuals.

Reports about Seroquel® abuse are consistent with the continuing increases in pharmaceutical drug diversion and abuse in Ohio. Trends of Seroquel® abuse will be monitored in the future OSAM Network reports.

OSAM-O-GRAMS report key findings of the Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring (OSAM) Network. Informants located throughout the state use qualitative and quantitative data to provide semiannual monitoring of substance abuse trends. The OSAM Network is funded by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services by contract to Wright State University and by subcontract to the University of Akron. This OSAM-O-GRAM is based on the June 2007 OSAM Network meeting.

Center for Interventions, Treatment, and Addictions Research;

Robert G. Carlson, PhD, Raminta Daniulaityte, PhD, Tamara Hansen, MPH, Russel Falck, MA

(937) 775-2066 (office), (937) 775-2214 (fax) <http://www.med.wright.edu/citar/>

Wright State University, Boonshoft School of Medicine, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy., Dayton, OH 45435-0001

For more information, visit the ODADAS website: <http://www.odadas.state.oh.us>