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## Physician Adoption of E-Prescribing Technology Increasing

The hand-written prescription is "on its way to becoming a historical curiosity," as physicians and pharmacies increasingly adopt electronic prescribing systems, according to a *New England Journal of Medicine* article by Richard Steinbrook, a physician and the national correspondent for *NEJM*, the [Newark Star-Ledger](#) reports.

Physicians and pharmacies are being motivated to adopt the technology by the promise of fewer prescribing errors and the possibility of e-prescribing mandates.

As of March, about 7% of the 560,400 office-based physicians were regularly writing e-prescriptions and about 73% of the 57,500 retail pharmacies in the U.S. were regularly receiving them, according to the article. Nationwide, about 2% of all prescriptions are sent electronically, the *Star-Ledger* reports.

Steinbrook said, "With any new technology, it takes a period of time for it to be adopted, and some people would rather let others work out the bugs."

He added that there still are barriers to the adoption of e-prescribing technology, including high start-up costs and Drug Enforcement Agency restrictions on e-prescribing of controlled substances.

DEA is considering lifting the ban. However, Steinbrook said that some physicians "aren't moving until they can do everything electronically" (Stewart, *Newark Star-Ledger*, 7/10).

The [NEJM article](#) is available online.

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