Study: Doctors overprescribing drugs

By Lisa Girion and Scott Glover, Los Angeles Times

Doctors are fueling the nation’s prescription drug epidemic and represent the primary source of narcotic painkillers for chronic abusers, according to a government study.

The finding challenges a widely held belief that has long guided policymakers: That the epidemic is caused largely by abusers getting their drugs without prescriptions, typically from friends and family.

Tom Frieden, doctor and director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which conducted the study, said the research showed the need for greater focus on doctors who are “problem prescribers.”

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