“What would I need to do to electronically prescribe controlled substances?”

1) There is an additional, one-time setup fee of $2000. There is also an on-going charge for controlled substance prescribing of $80 per provider, per year.

2) There is an identification-proofing process, with associated fees. This “identification-proofing” process involves sending documents to the doctor’s home address.

3) After identity proofing, the doctor is provided a physical device called a “security authentication token,” or an application to install to a personal smart phone. This device must be kept in the physician’s possession, and must be attached to the computer to write and send prescriptions for controlled substances.

4) Be aware that typically physicians that have used electronic controlled prescriptions do report an increase in calls from pharmacies and patients due to lack of understanding of the process.

5) Even when sending the prescriptions electronically, the provider must still comply with all record-keeping requirements for controlled substance prescription.

NOTES:

- As of July 2015, only about 46% of all pharmacy locations in the US currently can accept controlled prescriptions.
- Some pharmacies that are capable of receiving these scripts still do not have trained staff, and still will not accept controlled substance prescriptions electronically despite being capable of receiving them.
- As of July 2015, less than 1% of controlled substance prescriptions are transmitted electronically.

The pharmacies that can accept EPCS are available at: http://www.surescripts.com/epcs

Sources:
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3341776/