

Nebraska Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse



Strategic Initiatives Report | 2017

Background



In October of 2016, the summit, “Charting the Road to Recovery: Nebraska’s Response to Opioid Abuse” was convened to proactively address the abuse of prescription and illicit opioids in Nebraska. The Nebraska Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse was formed as a result of the summit. The sponsoring partners of this summit initiated a multi-disciplinary approach utilizing experts in prevention, treatment, and law enforcement to substantially reduce the incidence of abuse of prescription and illicit opioid drugs. The following report summarizes the progress made on the strategic initiatives set forth by the coalition partners in the areas of prevention, treatment, and law enforcement.

Strategic Initiatives

Prevention

Prescription Drug Take Back	4
Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention	5
Dose of Reality	7
Naloxone Access	8

Treatment

Medication Assisted Treatment	9
Training for Health Profession Students & Providers	11

Law Enforcement

DEA 360° Program	12
Ensuring Safety	13

Prevention

Prescription Drug Take Back

Nebraska MEDS Coalition & Nebraska Pharmacists Association



Nebraska
Pharmacists
Association

Most people who abuse prescription medications get them from a friend or a relative. It is, therefore, imperative that “leftover” prescription opioids be collected in order to reduce the supply of diverted drugs. The Statewide Drug Disposal Program gives the public an easy and safe way to get unused medications out of the house and out of the wrong hands, providing a solution to the multi-faceted opioid epidemic. The Nebraska MEDS coalition joins the Nebraska Pharmacists Association, the Nebraska Medical Association, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Nebraska Regional Poison Control Center, the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Groundwater Foundation, and the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department to create a network of pharmacies throughout the state that collect “leftover” medication. Nebraska MEDS has collected over 34,000 pounds of medication since January 2016 while continuing to enroll pharmacies in the program. Over 300 pharmacies currently participate. A list of participating pharmacies can be found at www.leftovermeds.com. The Nebraska Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse will continue to create awareness of the Nebraska MEDS project.



Prevention

Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention

DHHS Division of Public Health & UNMC



Nebraska's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)

Over the last year, DHHS enhanced the Nebraska Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) system. PDMP training information is available on the PDMP website at www.dhhs.ne.gov/PDMP. Training includes in-person sessions, on-demand webinars, and downloadable tutorials. The goals are to increase access and use of the PDMP by medical professionals, provide on-demand training, and an online PDMP registration process. The PDMP user interface is continually being improved, making medication history more customizable and user friendly for medical providers. DHHS plans to utilize the PDMP data for public-health surveillance to guide prevention efforts and evaluate effectiveness. Recently enacted legislation now requires daily reporting of dispensed prescriptions in the following manner:

- **January 1, 2017** mandated daily reporting of all dispensed controlled substances
- **January 1, 2018** mandated daily reporting of all dispensed prescription drugs
- **July 1, 2018** veterinarians licensed under the Veterinary Medicine and Surgery Practice Act shall be required to report dispensed prescriptions of controlled substances (Schedule II-IV). (Neb. Rev. Stat. §71-2454 (4))

UNMC PDMP Training:

The University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) will continue to train residents and providers in the use of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) to allow earlier identification of high risk patients who may be misusing opioid or other prescription medications.



Prevention

Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention

DHHS Division of Public Health

Pain Management Guidance Document

As of October 17, 2017, DHHS released a new prescribing resource for providers. DHHS worked with partners including the Nebraska Medical Association, professional boards, and physicians to create the Nebraska pain management guidance document. This guidance document is intended to make clinical decisions easier, provide effective options to treat pain, and ensure safety. The guidance document aligns with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain and promotes consistent, safe, and effective pain management standards for Nebraska prescribers. The document is available on the DHHS website at www.dhhs.ne.gov/PDMP.

Prevention

Dose of Reality

Nebraska Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse



DOSE OF REALITY

PREVENT PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLER ABUSE IN NEBRASKA.

In strengthening efforts to prevent abuse of opioids in Nebraska, the coalition launched the *Dose of Reality* campaign in February 2017. The campaign has two primary components including Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and a website: www.doseofreality.nebraska.gov.

Public Service Announcements

Committed as partners in the campaign, the Nebraska Broadcasters' Association members have extensively aired television and radio PSAs across the state to inform Nebraskans of the dangers of opioid misuse. The Nebraska Broadcaster's contribution has already well exceeded their initial generous commitment. To date, approximately 23 television and 110 radio stations have participated in airing 36,438 spots. The PSAs target common themes in opioid misuse, such as giving opioids to a friend or relative and "pharm" parties where people consume quantities of unidentified prescription drugs.

Dose of Reality Website

The *Dose of Reality* website provides information and resources regarding proper disposal of prescription drugs, finding treatment, and preventing prescription pain medication abuse. The "Need Help" page includes a locator option through SAMHSA or Nebraska DHHS for individuals needing assistance in treatment or recovery. Those seeking a Narcotics Anonymous in their area are able to use a link to find a chapter for support. The MEDS Coalition presence on the website offers another opportunity to remind Nebraskans of the critical need to properly dispose of their unused medications, helping keep their loved ones and neighbors safe from unintended access to prescription drugs.



Prevention

Naloxone Access

Needs Assessment & Expanded Access — *DHHS Division of Public Health*

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that blocks or reverses the effects of opioid medication during an overdose event. DHHS conducted a needs assessment with Emergency Medical Services, fire departments, law enforcement, physicians, pharmacists, and substance abuse treatment facilities. The results of the needs assessment guided the development of educational videos about access and use of naloxone. A media awareness campaign will be created by stakeholders with an anticipated completion date of March 2018.

Reduce Overdose Deaths — *DHHS Division of Behavioral Health*

The Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) is in the process of implementing protocols to purchase naloxone for individuals who are discharging from restrictive settings such as correctional facilities or residential treatment facilities. These individuals are at a statistically higher risk to overdose following discharge than individuals being treated in community programs. Through the State Targeted Response grant (STR), the DBH will be able to purchase up to 1,000 kits to be used for this purpose.

Expanding Naloxone Access for Law Enforcement

Over the last year, Nebraska's largest law enforcement agencies have significantly increased the availability of naloxone for their officers. The Nebraska State Patrol has issued approximately 125 doses of naloxone within the agency. Naloxone has been issued to the Investigative Services, Crime Laboratory, Evidence Technician, and Police Service Dog units. The Nebraska State Patrol is working on providing sufficient doses for traffic services. Increasing availability of naloxone to law enforcement officers, particularly in smaller agencies, is being accomplished through continued coordination between county and municipal first-responder agencies.

Treatment

Medication Assisted Treatment

DHHS & UNMC



In May 2016, DHHS DBH was awarded a two-year, \$2 million per year grant through SAMHSA's State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis (STR) program. The STR program aims to substantially reduce the incidence of abuse of prescription and illicit opioid drugs through ongoing collaboration between practitioners, experts, and leaders across the continuum of care. The program will also work to mitigate the effects of Opioid Use Disorder, including both prescription opioids and illicit drugs by identifying statewide needs, increasing access to treatment, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), and reducing prescription drug overdose deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities.

Implementation of Project ECHO:

Project ECHO, which stands for Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes, will be implemented in Nebraska. This model, created by Dr. Sanjeev Arora in New Mexico, is a collaborative learning model aimed at bringing specialty care knowledge and consultation to general practitioners and other service providers. In Nebraska, Project ECHO will focus on the assessment and treatment of Opioid Use Disorder and other addictions. Through a contract with the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN), a team of addiction experts will develop and deliver a series of didactic training sessions to interested clinicians and general practitioners. Additionally, practitioners who are treating patients can request consultations from the ECHO expert team during ECHO sessions. UNMC will promote Project ECHO calls to providers and trainees statewide to expand access to addiction expertise. Implementation efforts are underway and, as details are finalized, more information will be released. For more information on the Project ECHO model, please visit: <https://echo.unm.edu/>.

A blurred background image of a stethoscope resting on a white surface. A blue triangle is positioned in the upper left corner, containing the word 'Treatment' in white text.

Treatment

Medication Assisted Treatment

UNMC & DHHS

Increase Utilization of Buprenorphine:

DHHS Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) partnered with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN), and the Mid-America Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) to host a Medication Assisted Treatment Summit in August 2017. The general session was attended by almost 200 interested stakeholders from a variety of disciplines. In addition, a targeted four-hour session provided 25 prescribers from across the state a portion of the required education needed to pursue certification to prescribe buprenorphine. Ultimately, thirteen physicians, four physician assistants (PAs), and three advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) completed this session and additional training to apply for a buprenorphine waiver through SAMHSA (the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), roughly doubling the number of Nebraska providers able to prescribe Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction. In addition, the DBH has allocated additional money to each Regional Behavioral Health Authority to purchase buprenorphine for individuals who have no other funding source for this critical treatment component—it's projected that over 150 individuals will be able to access a year's supply of buprenorphine through this funding.

Treatment

Training for Health Profession Students & Providers

UNMC & DHHS



Training in the evidence-based diagnosis and treatment of Opioid Use Disorder has been addressed in a number of ways with several additional training programs in the planning phase.

Curriculum Assessment: UNMC completed a survey to assess where addiction and pain management are currently taught in the colleges of medicine, dentistry, nursing, allied health, pharmacy, and public health.

Residency Guidelines: The UNMC Graduate Medical Education Committee developed a “Safe Opioid Prescriptive Policy” that will be distributed to all resident physicians to guide their understanding of how to prescribe pain medications safely and to minimize opioid diversion, abuse, and overdose.

Addiction Medicine Fellowship: DHHS will partner with the UNMC College of Medicine to develop a 3 month executive fellowship in addiction for practicing providers (physicians, PAs, APRNs, pharmacists, etc.) and a yearlong addiction medicine fellowship for physicians. UNMC primary care departments will promote these fellowships.

New Addiction Services: The UNMC Department of Psychiatry and Nebraska Medicine have launched an outpatient Substance Use Disorder clinic and will develop an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) for patients with combined psychiatric and addiction disorders.

Interprofessional Training: The UNMC College of Nursing and the UNMC College of Pharmacy will explore possibilities for advanced practice nurses and pharmacists to address substance abuse and pain management through prevention, treatment, and education programs.

Law Enforcement

DEA 360° Program

A collaborative approach to Law Enforcement



Developing a “DEA 360°” program in Nebraska

Adequately combating drug trafficking at the state and local level necessitates collaboration with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In 2015, the DEA developed its “360° Strategy” which is a three-pronged approach that (a) coordinates law enforcement actions against drug cartels and heroin traffickers (b) initiates diversion control enforcement actions against DEA registrants operating illegally and (c) develops local community partnerships to provide empowering outreach. In 2016 the DEA developed four pilot cities for this strategy: Louisville, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Pittsburgh.

Although Omaha was not designated a DEA 360° city in 2017, much of the “360° strategy” is effectuated through collaboration with the treatment and prevention entities of the Nebraska Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse. The October 12th seizure of more than thirty pounds of fentanyl in Omaha exemplifies ongoing coordination with state and local law enforcement agencies in combating illicit opioid trafficking in Nebraska.

Law Enforcement

Ensuring Safety

Law Enforcement and Public Safety

The Nebraska State Patrol Crime Laboratory provided comprehensive guide for safe handling of fentanyl and fentanyl related compounds to all law enforcement agencies through the Nebraska Information Analysis Center (NIAC). The State Patrol has, through its respective troop areas, distributed approximately 1,500 field pocket guides to law enforcement officers throughout the state. These color coded cards provide a quick reference for law enforcement officers encountering unknown or potentially hazardous drugs so as to mitigate risk of exposure and ensure safe evidence collection and transportation. Understanding how to mitigate risk of and treat inadvertent exposure to illicit opioids that can cause overdose by transdermal transmission or inhalation is essential to the protection of Nebraska's public safety officers.

Nebraska's crime laboratories are currently experiencing an increase in the amount and variety of powerful illicit opioids. Nebraska's law enforcement agencies will be seeking introduction of legislation in the 2018 legislative session to ensure that such illicit opioids are appropriately codified under Nebraska's Controlled Substances Act.

