

# Opioid Abuse, Prevention, Treatment and Policy

## Quick Facts



### What are Opioids?

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, opioids are medications that act on the nervous system to relieve pain. They reduce the intensity of pain signals reaching the brain and affect those brain areas controlling emotion, which diminishes the effects of a painful stimulus.

### How Prevalent is Opioid Abuse?

- ▶ In 2014, there were 478 (17 per 100,000) fatal drug overdoses in Louisiana.
- ▶ In 2012, Louisiana had the 7th highest opioid pain reliever-prescribing rate in the U.S.
- ▶ Since the Prescription Monitoring Program began monitoring narcotic prescribing behavior, Louisiana has averaged 122 prescriptions per 100 people.
- ▶ According to the 2014 Caring Communities Youth Survey, more Louisiana female students reported past 30-day prescription drug use than males.
- ▶ From 1999 to 2014, more than 165,000 people died from overdose related to prescription opioids.
- ▶ Data from 2013 – 2015 indicates there were 6,252 opioid-related substance abuse treatment admissions in Louisiana.

### Opioid Abuse Prevention

The best way to prevent opioid overdose deaths is to improve opioid prescribing to reduce exposure to opioids, prevent abuse and stop addiction.

### What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is a medication approved by the FDA to prevent overdose by opioids such as heroin, morphine and oxycodone. It works by blocking opioid receptor sites thereby reversing the toxic effects of the overdose.

### Opioid Use Disorder Treatment

The treatment of opioid use disorders requires the implementation of evidence-based strategies such as medication-assisted treatment (MAT). MAT utilizes a comprehensive approach that combines the use of medication with counseling and behavioral therapies.

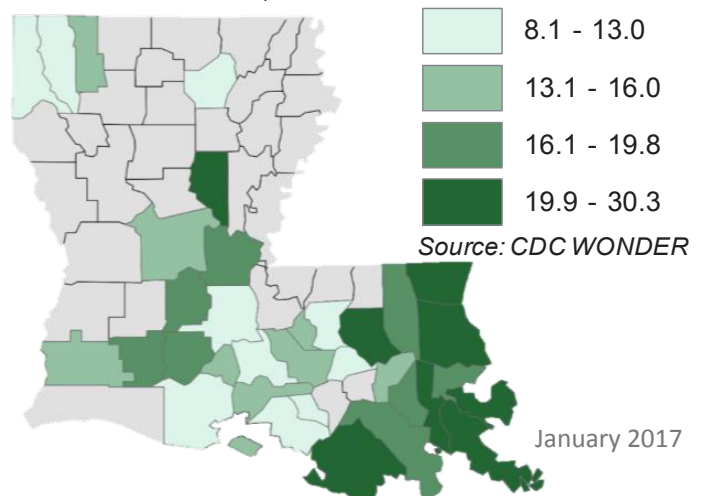
### Louisiana Responds to Opioid Epidemic

House Concurrent Resolution 113 of the 2016 Regular Legislative Session – This law created the Louisiana Commission on Preventing Opioid Abuse. The commission’s charge is to study and make recommendations regarding both short-term and long-term measures that can be taken to tackle prescription opioid and heroin abuse and addiction in Louisiana, by using the best practices and evidence-based strategies for its prevention, treatment and enforcement.

### Louisiana Opioid Policies

- ▶ Good Samaritan Law (Act 392) – Allows people to call 911 for overdose events. No criminal charges if drug paraphernalia is found.
- ▶ In 2006, Act 676 authorized the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy to develop a prescription monitoring program (PMP).
- ▶ Strengthening of Prescription Monitoring Program (Act 110) – Allows unlimited number of delegated users to access the prescription monitoring program.
- ▶ Naloxone Standing Order (Act 310) – In January, Louisiana issued a “standing order” allowing participating pharmacists to dispense naloxone to laypeople.

### Overdose Deaths, 2010-2015



## Grants: Louisiana Department of Health Receives Grants to Address Opioid Epidemic

### Office of Behavioral Health

#### Medication Assisted Treatment-Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction

\$1 million for three years to expand capacity for MAT, including wraparound services and recovery supports for those with opioid use disorders.

#### Strategic Prevention Framework – Prescription Drug Abuse

\$371,616 for five years to raise awareness about dangers of sharing medications, working with medical communities on risks of over prescribing, increasing education to schools, parents, prescribers and patients.

### Office of Public Health

#### Prescription Drug Overdose: Data-Driven Prevention Initiative

This \$810,000 three-year grant will fund strategies to advance and evaluate actions to address opioid misuse, abuse and overdose. This includes:

- ▶ Improving data collection and analysis around opioid misuse, abuse and overdose.
- ▶ Developing strategies that impact behaviors driving prescription opioid dependence and abuse.
- ▶ Working with communities to develop more comprehensive opioid overdose prevention programs.

## Resources Available for Understanding Opioids

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's *Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit – 2016* equips health care providers, communities and local governments with materials to develop practices and policies to help prevent opioid-related overdoses and deaths. It addresses issues for health care providers, first responders, treatment providers and those recovering from opioid overdose.

*Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health.* The report finds alcohol and drug misuse and severe substance use addiction to be one of America's most pressing public health concerns. Nearly 21 million Americans, more than the number of people who have all cancers combined, suffer from substance use disorders.

The Center for Disease Control developed and published the *CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain* to provide recommendations for the prescribing of opioid pain medication for patients 18 and older in primary care settings.

## Additional Information

National Governor's Association: *Finding Solutions to the Prescription Opioid & Heroin Crisis: A Road Map for States.*

*CMS Best Practices for Opioid Overdoses, Misuse and Addiction 2016.*

ASAM - *Practice Guideline for the Use of Medications in the Treatment of Addiction Involving Opioid Use* (Journal of Addictive Medicine September/ October 2015).

Office of National Drug Control Policy – *Heroin Availability Reduction Plan (HARP) and Implementation*

Louisiana Commission on Prevention of Opioid Abuse  
<http://ldh.la.gov/OpioidAbuse>

## Data Sources

### National Institute on Drug Abuse

[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

### Center for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### Louisiana Department of Health

[www.ldh.la.gov](http://www.ldh.la.gov)

### The Picard Center

[www.picardcenter.louisiana.edu](http://www.picardcenter.louisiana.edu)

### The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health

[www.addiction.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.addiction.surgeongeneral.gov)

