

Iowa Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health
Opioid Update for Wednesday, January 24, 2018

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) offers the Opioid Update to share information about opioid use and Iowa's efforts to address the national opioid epidemic. Please feel free to submit topics to Julie Jones at julie.jones@idph.iowa.gov.

In this issue:

- **Department Efforts**
- **Legislative Interest**
- **Opioid News**

Department Efforts

Patient Opioid Information Brochure

In collaboration with the Iowa Dental, Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy Boards, IDPH has developed an informational brochure on opioids for patients, family members and friends. Designed to educate individuals on what opioids are, side effects, what to know if you're prescribed opioids and how to prevent opioid overdose, the brochure is written in easy-to-read language.

To see a copy of the brochure, please click on the following link: [Patient Opioid Brochure](#).
To order copies of the brochure, please contact Julie Jones at julie.jones@idph.iowa.gov.

Your Life Iowa Brochure

Your Life Iowa brochures are now available! The brochure provides a brief overview of the information and resources available through the new IDPH Your Life Iowa helpline and website about alcohol and drug use, problem gambling, and thoughts of suicide. The brochure includes the toll-free helpline – **call 855-581-8111 or text 855-895-8398** – for people who want to talk live to someone who can help with any of these issues, including locating treatment services.

To see a copy of the brochure, please click on the following link: [Your Life Iowa Brochure](#)
To order copies of the brochure, please click on the following link and select Your Life Iowa Brochure as the topic: [Order Your Life Iowa Brochure](#)

Grant Update: Prevention of Opioid Misuse in Women

The Iowa Prevention of Opioid Misuse in Women (POMW) Program is a three-year grant awarded to IDPH by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office on Women's Health (OWH).

IDPH has completed a key strategy to support the grant's purpose by developing and implementing a digital media campaign to increase awareness on the risks of opioid misuse for women. The campaign focuses on the unique risk factors and vulnerabilities women may face when using opioids.

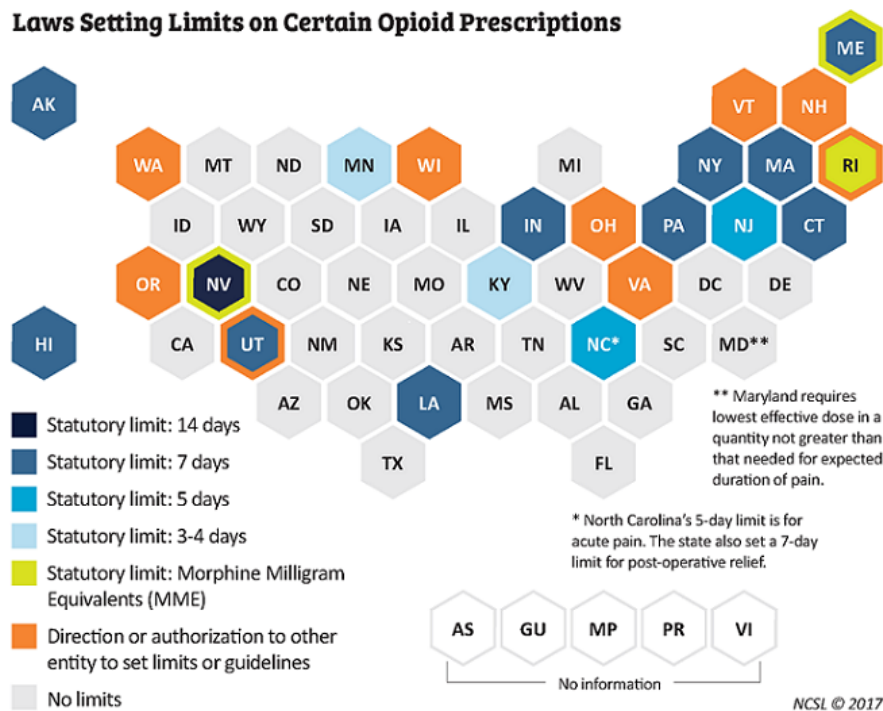
To find out more about the POMW digital media campaign, please click on the following link: [POMW](#)

Legislative Interest

Opioid Prescribing Limits

During the legislative session, IDPH will spotlight opioid-related initiatives or promising practices endorsed by federal partners and adopted by other states. In this edition, the focus is on Opioid Prescribing Limits.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), legislation limiting opioid prescriptions debuted in 2016, with Massachusetts passing the first law in the nation. Among other provisions, the law set a seven-day supply limit for initial (first-time) opioid prescriptions. By the end of 2016, seven states had passed legislation limiting opioid prescriptions, and the trend continued in 2017. According to NCSL, as of August 2017, 24 states had enacted legislation with some type of limit, guidance or requirement related to opioid prescribing.



Iowa does not currently have laws limiting the number of days for initial opioid prescriptions written for acute pain. Recent data from the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) demonstrates that despite data showing what appears to be a reduction in the total number of opioid prescriptions filled, *the average number of days for each prescription dispensed has increased 16.5% since 2013.*

Opioid Prescriptions Dispensed in Iowa					
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Average # Days	14.26	14.96	16.04	16.47	16.62*

*First Three Quarters of 2017

It is not yet clear if limiting initial prescriptions will be addressed this year in Iowa. We do know that four out of five reported heroin users said their introduction to opioids was in the form of a prescription pill. We also know that the majority of these same individuals reported that the opioid pills they obtained were not from a prescription written for them, suggesting the pills came instead from someone else's prescribed supply.

For more information regarding opioid prescribing limits and legislation passed in other states, please click on the following link: [National Conference of State Legislatures](http://www.ncsl.org).

Opioid News

Renewal of Determination that a Public Health Emergency Exists

Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Eric Hargan, announced on January 19, 2018, that a public health emergency continues to exist nationwide as a result of the consequences of the opioid crisis. For that reason, the public health emergency declaration will be renewed, effective January 24, for another 90 days.