

Iowa Department of Public Health Opioid Update: November 2020

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 RaChel Greenwood at rachel.greenwood@idph.iowa.gov.

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Iowa News

Iowa's Prescription Drug Take Back Event

On October 24, 2020, around 100 communities took part in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. This opportunity allowed Iowans to safely dispose of unused and unneeded medications, especially those accumulated during the pandemic. "Getting rid of unneeded medications is especially important now, because of additional stressors that may be associated with the pandemic," said Dale Woolery, Director of the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy. "Take Back is one step nearly all of us can take to help prevent prescription drug misuse, addiction and overdose."

This year's Take Back Day resulted in 11,143 pounds of unwanted medication being collected in Iowa.

To learn more about this year's event and previous Take Back days, please click on the following link: [Take Back](#)

Opioid News

Addiction and overdose are dirty words. That only makes them more dangerous.

Lauren Sisler is an ESPN journalist. This personal account describes the effects of stigma and shame within a family after fatal opioid poisonings. She shares her story in the hope that others can help themselves and/or their family members open dialogues about substance use and get the treatment they need.

To read the entire article, please click on the following link: [NBC](#)

Vital Signs: Characteristics of Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Opioids and Stimulants — 24 States and the District of Columbia, January–June 2019

A recent report published by the CDC on overdose fatalities from January through June of 2019 indicates that overdose deaths increased between 2018 and 2019. In 83.8% of fatal overdoses between January and June of 2019, illicitly manufactured fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, or methamphetamine, (alone or in combination) were involved; in 62.7% of those overdose deaths,

there was at least one documented potential opportunity for an overdose prevention intervention.

The CDC cites presence of bystanders, recent release from institutions, and high-risk routes of drug use (e.g. injection) as important intervention opportunities for overdose prevention and response.

To read the entire report, please click on the following link: [CDC](#)

Health On Wheels: Tricked-Out RVs Deliver Addiction Treatment To Rural Colorado

This article describes an initiative to help increase access to treatment for people with substance use disorder across the state of Colorado through RV health clinics. These mobile health units provide telehealth equipment within the RV so clients can access clinicians in clinics across the state. They are operated by a nurse, a peer specialist, and a counselor to provide in-person drug testing, counselling, medications for opioid use disorder (OUD), and naloxone (a medication that helps to reverse opioid overdose).

To read entire article describing this initiative, please click here: [NPR](#)

Opioid overdoses on the rise during COVID-19 pandemic, despite telemedicine care

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the use of telehealth. However, experts explain that while telehealth currently fills an important gap for access to treatment, those best served by telehealth are already engaged in treatment, with the most vulnerable populations not able to obtain the care they need due to lack of access to privacy, Wi-Fi, phones or other resources. As Dr. Banta-Green, a principal research scientist at the University of Washington Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute states, "Telehealth is not the magic solution."

To read the entire article, please click here: [ABC](#)

Experts: Revamped OxyContin hasn't curbed abuse, overdoses

Recently the advisory panel of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reached a conclusion on the evidence on whether or not a harder-to-crush version of OxyContin designed to discourage use via injection or snorting actually resulted in fewer overdoses or deaths. The FDA experts voted that the updated harder-to-crush version did appear to cut down use via snorting or injecting compared to the original drug, but they also overwhelmingly determined that the reformulation did not lead to fewer overdoses or opioid use disorder. The FDA will consider these opinions when revisiting OxyContin's terms of approval.

To read the entire article, please click here: [FDA](#)

Resources

The Opioid Crisis and the Hispanic/Latino Population: An Urgent Issue

Due to the recent dramatic increase in opioid poisonings among Latinx communities across the U.S., SAMHSA has released an urgent issue brief.

This brief contains recent opioid epidemic prevalence and opioid poisonings data, as well as discussion on contextual factors that impact the opioid epidemic in Latinx communities and innovative outreach and engagement strategies that have the potential to link Latinx Americans to care.

To download the entire PDF, please click on the following link: [SAMHSA](#)

Opioid Overdose Crisis Compounded by Polysubstance Use

Nearly 63% of opioid overdose deaths in the United States in the first half of 2018 involved multiple substances, such as cocaine, methamphetamine, or benzodiazepines. This fact sheet by PEW Charitable Trusts provides information on multiple substances in an effort to inform efforts to reduce opioid overdose deaths.

To view and download this fact sheet, please click on the following link: [PEW](#)

You may also access previous issues by going to our website:

<http://idph.iowa.gov/substance-abuse/opioid-update>