

Iowa Department of Public Health
 Division of Behavioral Health
 Opioid Update for Wednesday, December 13, 2017

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.

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Department Efforts

Data Update

As the end of the year approaches, we're starting to receive requests for data on opioid overdose and opioid related deaths for 2017. Many are surprised when they hear the numbers because currently they're lower than what was reported for 2016. Unfortunately, the reason for this is not good news. Because of the time needed by reporting sources to review, verify and approve the data used to populate the reports by our Bureau of Health Statistics, the final data aren't available until well after the end of the year (for example: 2016 data wasn't moved from provisional to final until September of 2017). These processes are in place to ensure high accuracy and quality of data. Because of this, we've prepared the following table that hopefully reflects what has, and may transpire.

2016 Opioid Overdose Deaths	
(As of 11/30/2016)	(Final 2016)
70	86

2017 Opioid Overdose Deaths	
(As of 11/30/2017)	(Projected 2017)*
78	96

2016 Opioid Related Deaths	
(As of 11/30/2016)	(Final 2016)
141	180

2017 Opioid Related Deaths	
(As of 11/30/2017)	(Projected 2017)*
157	201

Opioid Overdose Deaths are determined by using the following [ICD-10 codes](#): X40-X44, X60-X64, X85, Y10, Y11-Y14.
 Opioid Related Deaths are determined when the subset is filtered to the first contributing cause using codes: T40.1-.4, T40.6

*Projections were determined using the percentage of increase reflected in 2016 data (Overdose = 23%; Related = 28%).

As can be seen, if trends continue, it appears that in 2017 Iowa will experience an increase in the number of opioid overdose and opioid related deaths. But, whether or not there's an increase in the number of deaths, even one death due to opioids is too many. For this reason, IDPH continues to champion efforts to address opioid misuse in our state by promoting prevention and outreach activities, expanding the use of medication-assisted treatment, increasing access to Naloxone, supporting legislative changes, participating in collaborative approaches, and being a resource wherever needed.

For more information on IDPH efforts to address opioid misuse in our state, please contact Kevin Gabbert, at kevin.gabbert@idph.iowa.gov.

State Funded Non-Profits Can Purchase Naloxone at Reduced Cost

In a previous edition of the Opioid Update, IDPH shared that a Master Agreement had been developed with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to allow “public entities” such as EMS and First Responders to purchase Naloxone at a reduced price of \$75 for a two-pack kit of the nasal spray. IDPH is happy to announce that after further discussion, it has been determined that the Master Agreement can now be used to allow non-profits that receive funding from the State, the ability to purchase Naloxone at the same reduced price. Agencies will still need to meet the rest of the agreement criteria, which includes having a healthcare professional such as a medical director, accept responsibility for the purchase.

For more information on purchasing Naloxone using the DAS Master Agreement, please contact Kathy Harper at kathy.harper2@iowa.gov.

IDPH and Department of Public Safety (DPS) Collaborate to Address Opioid Overdose

Through Iowa’s Opioid State Targeted Response (STR) Grant, IDPH was able to fund the purchase of 400 Naloxone kits for the Department of Public Safety (DPS). According to Paul Feddersen, Assistant Director in the Division of Narcotics Enforcement, “DPS is extremely grateful for the partnership with IDPH in working to combat the opioid crisis. IDPH’s grant will provide a crucial resource to all DPS officers on the front lines responding to opioid overdoses. This grant will allow us to equip every officer with Naloxone, which will undoubtedly save lives and provide another safety measure for our officers. Partnerships like this play a vital role when it comes to educational outreach and making a difference on a serious issue such as this.”

Opioid News

States Eye Adding Gabapentin to Controlled Substance List*

Gabapentin is a popular medication for treating neuropathic pain and epilepsy, but reports of illicit use of the drug are on the rise. Although gabapentin can be used alone, most cases of its misuse also involve opioids, benzodiazepines or alcohol, and the results can be fatal.

In response to a rise in drug deaths involving gabapentin, some states—including Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia—are adding the medication to controlled substance rosters. Gabapentin is not currently a federally scheduled drug.

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

NIATx Buprenorphine Implementation Toolkit

Formerly known as the Network for the Improvement of Addiction Treatment, NIATx has been working for nearly 15 years with behavioral healthcare organizations across the country to improve access to – and retention in – treatment for individuals with a substance misuse or mental health issue. And, as the treatment field continues to evolve, NIATx has been right there keeping pace. One of the ways they’ve been staying involved is through their efforts to help organizations address the growing opioid epidemic by developing the NIATx Buprenorphine Implementation Toolkit. Designed to guide interested providers through the challenges of becoming a buprenorphine treatment program, the toolkit addresses a wide range of topics such as: client benefits; making a business case; securing buy-in; recruiting healthcare professionals; addressing diversion; and developing sample forms. There’s even a searchable database of over 200 articles that can be accessed for additional information.

To learn more about the toolkit, please click on the following link: [NIATx](#)

Upcoming Opioid Conference:

- **The Opioid Crisis: Strategies for Treatment and Recovery**

March 7-8: Chicago

For more information, please click on the following link: [The Opioid Crisis](#)