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The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Directors
D.C. Update

News from the States, new federal resources, and more

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News from the States

Decrease in heroin-related overdose deaths in Utah

Last week, Lt. Governor Spencer Cox and leaders from several of Utah's executive agencies [announced](#) that for the first time in six years, the State of Utah experienced a decrease in heroin-related overdose deaths. Additionally, data was released showing that the number of prescription opioid overdose deaths declined for the third consecutive year. Utah was one of only nine States nationwide to observe a decrease in opioid overdose deaths from 2016 to 2017. The Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH), directed by NASADAD Board Member Doug Thomas, has been actively involved in numerous State initiatives designed to reduce the impact of opioid abuse. Some recent DSAMH efforts include:



- Provided grants to 8 local communities to implement evidence-based prevention activities;
- Supported the *Use Only as Directed* and the *Stop the Opidemic* Media Campaigns;
- Provided resources to train and equip first responders with Naloxone;
- Helped *Use Only as Directed* install permanent medication disposal drop boxes at 21 Intermountain Community Pharmacy locations across Utah;
- Assisted 438 people enroll in health insurance programs that were previously uninsured;
- Screened 2,919 patients for opioid use disorder in a physical health care setting and referred 267 to treatment;
- Treated 6,605 individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD) in 2018--an increase of 12% from 2017;
- The number of clients with OUD receiving MAT increased by 31% from 2017 to 2018;
- Provided over 12,000 hours of training and technical assistance on addiction and to 18 Health Centers in 2018;
- Peer Support Specialists engaged 95 individuals admitted to emergency rooms due to an OUD in 2018 through the ARCHES Program;
- Free family support groups were established in 9 communities in Utah and served 72 new families in 2018; and
- 473 individuals voluntarily participated in recovery support services through the local authorities.

Arkansas releases resources for upcoming drug take back day

The State of Arkansas Office of the Drug Director has released new resources--including a [music video](#)--to educate the public about the importance of monitoring, securing, and safely disposing of prescription drugs. The Arkansas Take Back [website](#) includes information about

take back options, prevention, treatment, and recovery resources, background on the opioid crisis, and more. The next drug take back day will be held on October 27th, although there are also two hundred 24-hour take back boxes located throughout the State. The Arkansas Drug Director and NASADAD Member is Kirk Lane.

In the News

State score cards on mental health and addiction parity statutes

October 3, 2018 marked the 10th anniversary of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA). At an anniversary event, the Kennedy-Satcher Center for Mental Health Equity, The Kennedy Forum, The Carter Center, and Well Being Trust jointly released "[Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes](#)." The overview provides a letter grade for the quality of each State's parity statutes, in addition to a listing of key issues and recommendations, plus relevant statistics regarding the mental health of residents. The groups also released an accompanying [technical report](#), which describes the process that was used to identify key elements of legal codes relating to parity across all 50 states and summarizes the research that assessed the strength and quality of statutes using a quantitative and systematic coding methodology.

Study finds that fewer exchange plans are providing out-of-network benefits

A recent Robert Wood Johnson Foundation [study](#) found that in 2018, only 29 percent of health plans in the individual market included out-of-network coverage, down from 58 percent in 2015. In the small group market, 64 percent of plans included out-of-network benefits in 2018, down from 71 percent in 2015. The report notes that along with the decline in plans with out-of-network benefits, there has also been a decline in the comprehensiveness of those out-of-network benefits that are offered, and in about 95 percent of individual and small group plans with out-of-network benefits, the deductible must be met before there is any cost-sharing.

Around the Agencies

CDC releases toolkit for providers on implementing the Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control recently released a [resource toolkit](#), *Quality Improvement and Care Coordination: Implementing the [CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain](#)*. The quality improvement measures provided in the resource are meant to be flexible so that healthcare systems can pick interventions that work best for their practice and patient population. The purpose of the resource is to encourage selective use of long-term opioid therapy in the context of managing chronic pain through: evidence-based prescribing; quality improvement measures to advance the integration of the guideline into clinical practice; and practice-level strategies to improve care coordination.

USDA launches interactive data tool to help rural communities address the opioid crisis

Last week, Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development, Anne Hazlett, [announced](#) the launch of an interactive data tool aimed to empower community leaders in fighting the opioid crisis. The opioid misuse [Community Assessment Tool](#) enables users to overlay substance misuse data against socioeconomic, census, and other public information. The tool aims to provide local leaders in small towns with greater access to user-friendly and relevant data to help them build solutions for prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Upcoming Events

HRSA-sponsored webinar on pregnant & parenting women with SUD

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is sponsoring a [webinar](#) that will be hosted by the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) on State options for promoting recovery among pregnant and parenting women (PPW) with opioid or substance use disorders. The webinar will feature speakers from Colorado who will describe the coverage, financing, and care delivery strategies that their State agencies and safety net providers leverage to facilitate recovery among pregnant and parenting women with SUD, including opportunities for cross-system collaboration. The webinar will be held on Wednesday, October 24th at 1:00 pm EST.

