Louisiana Opioid Epidemic Town Hall Series

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Lake Charles, Louisiana

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• What are Opioids? Opioids are psychoactive substances derived from the opium poppy or their synthetic analogs.

**Prescription Pain Medications:**
- Vicodin
- Percocet
- Hydrocodone
- Morphine
- Fentanyl
- Etc.

**Illicit opioids:**
- Heroin
- Fentanyl analogs
- Non-medical use of prescription drugs
National Perspective

- An opioid overdose death occurs approximately every 15 minutes.

- **115 Americans die every day** from an opioid overdose; more than 42,000 deaths in 2016 alone.

- Opioid death rates are five times higher in 2016 than in 1999 and continue to rise.

- Of those addicted in the United States, 2.1 million are addicted to prescription drugs, and 517,000 are addicted to heroin.*

More than 30% of Americans have some form of acute or chronic pain, for which opioids have been prescribed.

If opioids are used in sufficient quantity over a prolonged period, users will become both physically and psychologically dependent.

Prescription monitoring programs allow providers to more readily identify individuals who exhibit drug seeking behavior. The Louisiana program is managed by the Board of Pharmacy.

However, individuals may turn to other substitutes including heroin, synthetic opioids, or purchase of fake pills form the dark web that may contain deadly doses of fentanyl/carfentanly.
Fentanyl and Carfentanil

- **Fentanyl**, a drug that is 30 times stronger than heroin and claimed the lives of more than 20,000 Americans last year, is showing up in both Canada and the United States.

- **Carfentanil** or carfentanyl is an analog of the synthetic opioid analgesic fentanyl. A unit of carfentanil is 100 times as potent as the same amount of fentanyl, 5,000 times as potent as a unit of heroin and 10,000 times as potent as a unit of morphine.
Nationwide: The sharpest increase in overdose deaths in 2016 occurred among those related to fentanyl analogs (synthetic opioids) resulting in over 20,000 deaths.
2016 Opioid Poisoning Death Rates per 100,000 (By Parish)

Source: Louisiana Board of Pharmacy United States Census Bureau LDH Bureau of Vital Records & Statistics
In Louisiana: Opioid-related deaths of all opioid types are increasing with the exception of methadone

Source: State of Louisiana Vital Records, 2012-2016*

*Data from 2013, 2014, and 2016 are preliminary and have not been adjusted with coroner validation
**Opioid overdoses are defined by any ICD-10 code of T40.1, T40.2, T40.3, or T40.4
2016 Opioid Deaths in Louisiana: Male vs. Female

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

- Males: 63.5%
- Females: 36.5%

2016 Louisiana Opioid Overdose Deaths by Race

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Other
Total Opioid Prescriptions per 100 Louisiana Residents 2012 – 2017

Source: Louisiana Prescription Monitoring Program

Graph indicates over five million opioid prescription written each year.
PMP Utilization by prescribers has increased since legislation passed. Pharmacist utilization peaked in quarter 3 of 2017.

*2017 numbers as of 01/18

The gold bar approximates effective date of Act 76, regarding PMP registration & usage, June 12, 2017

*2017 numbers as of 01/18
Impact of *Short-Acting Opioids 7-Day Quantity Limit* Policy in Opioid Naïve Recipients

*Preliminary Results in Medicaid Population*

**Average number of units dispensed per claim decreased by 25.5%**

- 18 months pre-policy = 25.29 units/claim
- 3 months post-policy = 18.84 units/claim
The Federal Health and Human Services (HHS) Opioid Strategy
Louisiana Opioid Surveillance Initiative

Grant I: Data-Driven Prevention Initiative

- Accesses existing LDH databases and partners with external organization to collect and analyze health data related to opioid use disorder.
- Results disseminated through facts sheets, publications, training and educational materials, and the online data and surveillance system.
- Collaborates with the Prescription Monitoring Board to disseminate data on the opioid prescription patterns in the state.
Explore Opioid Data in Louisiana

Opioids – both prescription and illicit – are the main driver of drug overdose deaths nationally. The Louisiana Department of Health has developed a multi-disciplinary strategic approach to reducing overdoses in the state. The Bureau of Health Informatics in the Office of Public Health is supporting these strategies by leveraging data from multiple internal and external sources to strengthen readiness, capacity building, and program development.

The Louisiana Opioid Data and Surveillance System has been developed to provide access to health professionals, researchers, and decision makers to access, analyze, and apply data to statewide opioid abuse reduction efforts. Its goal is to evaluate the impact of programmatic and policy efforts and track the behavior of what is now considered a public health epidemic nationwide.

The OPH Bureau of Health Informatics (BHI) and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have partnered to provide this broad range of indicators and measures. Data within this system is interactive, and can be viewed in different formats, such as table, graph, and maps. The data displays, which have been carefully designed and reviewed by health experts and data specialists, allow various indicators to be explored geographically and over time. Quick access is also provided to associated information and links.

The site was funded through a partnership between the LDH Office of Public Health, Bureau of Health Informatics and the CDC National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Cooperative Endeavor Agreement 6 NU17CE924970-01-02.

What do you want to know about opioids in Louisiana?

Choose a Category: Death
Choose a Topic: Number of opioid deaths
Show data by: Quarter Year Select Quarter: 2015 - Qtr 4
Choose a Population: Age: All Age
Race: All Races Black Other White
Sex: All Genders Female Male

Select Geography: Parish Region State
by Region: 9 selected
Parishes: 64 selected

What measure do you want to see: Age-Adjusted Rate Count Crude Rate

Clear Display Results
Challenges in Classification of “Opioid Involved Deaths”

1) Cause of death secondary to drug toxicity: Opioids can be in a person’s system and cause organ failure or brain injury.

2) Mixed drug intoxication: Opioids are often mixed with other drugs, such as cocaine, methamphetamines, benzodiazepines, etc.

3) Drug classification: “Opioid” encompass a broad array of drugs, including heroin, fentanyl, and various prescription medications which are hard to differentiate from one another.

4) Coroner discretion in determining the cause of death as opioid related.
Roles for Public Health

► Public Health Excels in Surveillance, Prevention, and Informing Policy.

► Works Collaboratively with other state agencies to promote primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies.
  ▪ Support Regional Summits & Town Halls to Provide Community Awareness and Education
  ▪ Work with Human Services Districts to develop referral and educational tools; Increase effectiveness of outreach and prevention in communities

► Improve collaboration for response with other state and local entities...
Louisiana’s Response & Approach to the Opioid Epidemic

Data Informed process has identified key areas to address:

• Prevention
• Intervention
• Treatment
• Recovery
Louisiana’s Response & Approach to the Opioid Epidemic

• Advisory Council on Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education (H.O.P.E. Council) – Act 88 of the 2017 Regular Session
  • Data and Surveillance Committee
  • Coordination Plan Committee

• LDH Steering Committee
  • Office of Public Health – Surveillance
  • Office of Behavioral Health – Prevention and Treatment
  • Medicaid – Policy
  • Bureau of Media and Communications, LDH Leadership

• Local/Regional Response
  • Local Governing Entity: Imperial Calcasieu Human Services Authority) and Local Partners
  • Behavioral Health Group, Lake Charles-Opioid Treatment Program
Opioid-related laws passed in 2017

**Seven Day Supply**
- Law limits first-time prescriptions of opioids for acute pain to a seven day supply, with exceptions when medically appropriate

**Advisory Council**
- Law creates a 13-member advisory council on heroin and opioid prevention and education (HOPE)

**PMP Enhancement**
- Law strengthens our Prescription Monitoring Program, including mandated registration for any prescriber, and mandated queries before opioids are prescribed and every 90 days during treatment. Continuing education for controlled substance prescribing

**PMP Applicability**
- Law broadens the Prescription Monitoring Program access to include counselors, parole officers, medical examiners, coroners
Louisiana State Targeted Response (STR)
Federal Grants to the Office of Behavioral Health

**Prevention Services**
- Education on preventing and managing opioid overdoses
- Access to overdose reversal drugs (naloxone)
- Encourage the public to call 9-1-1
- Encourage prescribers to check prescriptions using the state Prescription Monitoring Program

**Intervention/Rescue Services:**
- 3,161 of 4,000 Narcan kits distributed to LGE’s based on needs assessment.

**Treatment Services**
- Methadone treatment to uninsured and underinsured in local OBH offices (535 new & 181 year 1 clients)
- Expand counseling and treatment services at the local level
- Promote psychosocial counseling and behavioral therapy
- Increase by 1,670 the number of individual with OUD being treated with EBP’s (835/yr for two years)

**Recovery Services**
- Provide assistance to opioid use disorder (OUD) patients with housing, benefits, vocational and educational opportunities
- Assist clients moving successfully through the stages of treatment and recovery.
- Ensure each client is connected to all available services
- Increase recovery supports for 600 OUD clients, (300/yr x 2 yrs)

**Department of Corrections Partnership**
- Make medication therapy available prior to release
- Offer monthly medication and aftercare services to ensure continuity of care
Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

Medication-assisted treatment, including opioid treatment programs, combines behavioral therapy and medication to treat substance use disorders.

As a part of grant awards, LDH Office of Behavioral Health will be able to expand and enhance capacity for MAT, wraparound services, and recovery support services for individuals with opioid use disorders.
Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

There are three medications commonly used to treat opioid addiction:

- **Methadone** – clinic-based opioid agonist that does not block other narcotics while preventing withdrawal while taking it; daily liquid dispensed only in specialty regulated clinics (agonist)

- **Naltrexone** – office-based non-addictive opioid antagonist that blocks the effects of other narcotics; daily pill or monthly injection (antagonist)

- **Buprenorphine** – office-based opioid agonist/antagonist that blocks other narcotics while reducing withdrawal risk; daily dissolving tablet, cheek film, or 6-month implant under the skin (partial agonist, with less euphoria, less respiratory depression, and less dependence)
Medicaid Expansion Substance Use Services*

7,218 adults are receiving specialized substance use outpatient services

7,873 adults are receiving specialized substance use residential services

*Statistics as of December 4, 2017 when Medicaid Expansion reached 456,004 Louisiana citizens
In 2017, Louisiana nearly doubled the number of DATA-certified* physicians providing buprenorphine treatment to at least 30 patients each.

Physicians are being encouraged to become **Suboxone certified** through SAMHSA certification process. There are few incentives to support this certification. MAT services can only be enhanced if there is an increase in physicians available to provide the service, and Medicaid paying for those services that are crucial to the success of the medication regimen.

*Drug Addiction Treatment Act – certified to treat opioid use disorder with buprenorphine

LDH’s Office of Behavioral Health collaborates with 10 methadone clinics across the state:

- These treatment facilities for MAT are supported by self-pay.
- Currently Medicaid only pays for methadone for chronic pain.
- Total OTP capacity = 4,962 patients
- Grants to the state have helped with providing payment of MAT services for the uninsured and underinsured.
- The grants are time-limited.

Map from Louisiana Health Department website: http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/directory/category/35
Naloxone Standing Order

• Naloxone is the an opioid antagonist that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

• Louisiana Secretary of Health, issued a “standing order” for naloxone, allowing for participating pharmacists to dispense naloxone without a formal prescription to lay persons including caregivers, family, and friends of an opioid user.

• The order also includes guidance to provide direction on how to administer naloxone to someone who has overdosed.

• LA Medicaid: Since January, 2017 there have been approximately 480 claims paid for Naloxone, with the majority of these claims paid for the Narcan Nasal Spray at an average cost of $128.00.
LDH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is distributing free auto-injector naloxone kits to EMS departments statewide.

The Louisiana Attorney General’s Office is offering single draw-down doses of naloxone available to first responders who request them.

The LDH Office of Behavioral Health is distributing free nasal-spray naloxone kits. As there will be a limited number of kits purchased, priority is given to the following groups: 1) Local Human Services Districts/Authorities based on need; 2) Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) and 3) community groups for distribution to their at-risk clients and families.

Note: 3,161 of 4,000 Narcan kits distributed to LGE’s based on needs assessment. Many CVS and Walgreens Pharmacies in Louisiana have Naloxone available without an individual prescription.
Call to Action

• Remember the Louisiana Department of Health’s main message:
  • **ACT on Opioids**
    • Ask your doctor about alternatives to opioids
    • Call for information and help (referrals for treatment)
    • Tell your friends and family about dangers of opioids

• Do not take ANY pills or medications not prescribed by your doctor and dispensed by a licensed pharmacy (like Walgreens, CVS, RiteAid, WalMart, etc.) Even one grain of carfentanil (the size of a grain of salt or sand) in one of many pills, could be **LETHAL**.

• Do not take opioid pain killers any more than needed. Instead, talk to your doctor about non-opioid alternatives.

• Sign a “Non-opioid directive with your doctor.” Do not even risk becoming dependent or addicted.

• Get rid of any extra/unused pain pills in your home. Learn where drop boxes are located.

• Learn more about overdose reversal medications, like naloxone, available at your pharmacy.