

Issue brief: National Snapshot of Overdose Epidemic Updated June 2024

The nation's drug overdose and death epidemic has killed more than one million Americans in the past 25 years. The epidemic affects every state and continues to be driven by illicitly manufactured fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine, often in combination or in adulterated forms. More than 106,000 deaths were [reported](#) in the United States between May 2022 to May 2023. The AMA continues to urge policymakers' action to increase access to evidence-based care for substance use disorders, pain and harm reduction measures. The research, news articles, state health department reports and other information below cite data from multiple and varied sources, including national, state and local public health agencies, law enforcement, emergency medical services, hospitals, treatment centers, and medical journals. Relevant AMA advocacy, resources and recommendations to end the epidemic also are below.

- Recommendations from the [AMA Substance Use and Pain Care Task Force](#) and the [2023 AMA Overdose Epidemic national report](#) highlight physicians' actions and other steps that must be taken to have a meaningful impact on reducing drug-related mortality and improving patient outcomes.
- Additional AMA resources include:
 - Issue Brief from the AMA Advocacy Resource Center, [Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Enforcement: What will it take for patients to receive the benefits of their premium dollars?](#)
 - AMA research collaboration with Manatt Health: [Improving Access to Care for Pregnant and Postpartum People with Opioid Use Disorder: Recommendations for Policymakers](#)
 - [AMA-Manatt Health 2022 state policy toolkit](#) provides more than 400 specific laws, regulations, policy guidance and other actions being implemented to help reduce mortality and improve outcomes.
 - [The Fight to End the Nation's Overdose Epidemic and Restore Compassionate Care: Profiles in Leadership](#) profiles the work of more than 25 practicing physicians, policymakers, researchers and advocates working daily to reduce drug-related mortality and improve patient outcomes.
 - [Dispelling Myths of Bystander Opioid Overdose](#) is a new issue brief to provide relevant clinical information regarding bystander overdose as well as AMA policy regarding harm reduction initiatives.
- The AMA continues to urge states, pharmacy chains, and payers to remove all reference to the 2016 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention opioid prescribing guidelines and replace them with the updated [CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain—United States, 2022](#), which CDC said "updates and replaces" the 2016 guideline. Additional, constructive guidance is available in the newly updated [Federation of State Medical Boards Strategies for Prescribing Opioids for the Management of Pain](#).
- [AMA Education on Substance Use Disorders and Addiction Education](#) to meet new DEA Requirements of the [MATE Act](#).

See below for national news and other reports. State-by-state reports can be found [here](#).

For more information, please contact Daniel Blaney-Koen, JD, Senior Attorney, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at daniel.blaney-koen@ama-assn.org.

National reports

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- **How Our Overdose Crisis Response Is Delayed At The Pharmacy.**
<https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/our-overdose-crisis-response-delayed-pharmacy> May 14, 2024
- **National and regional trends in fentanyl seizures in the United States, 2017–2023**
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0955395924001026?via%3Dihub> May 13, 2024
- **AMA, ASAM, APhA, ASHP sign-on letter to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of National Drug Control Policy and Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration.** <https://searchf.ama-assn.org/letter/documentDownload?uri=%2Funstructured%2Fbinary%2Fletter%2FLETTERS%2Ffinder.zip%2Ffinder%2F2024-5-10-AMA-Sign-On-Letter-to-DEA-ASH-SAMHSA-ONDCP.pdf> May 10, 2024
- **Mental Health Parity: Recent Ninth Circuit Ruling Bolsters MHPAEA and ERISA Protections, Clarifying Pleading Standards.** <https://natlawreview.com/article/mental-health-parity-recent-ninth-circuit-ruling-bolsters-mhpaea-and-erisa> May 7, 2024
- **State Leaders Agree Behavioral Health a Top Bipartisan Concern in 2024.**
<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/04/29/state-leaders-agree-behavioral-health-a-top-bipartisan-concern-in-2024> April 29, 2024
- **Strategies for Prescribing Opioids for the Management of Pain. Federation of State Medical Boards.** <https://www.fsmb.org/siteassets/advocacy/policies/strategies-for-prescribing-opioids-for-the-management-of-pain.pdf> April 2024
- **Say Hello to Your Addiction Risk Score—Courtesy of the Tech Industry.**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/20/opinion/addiction-risk-score-avertd-narxcare.html> April 24, 2024
- **Opioid Overdose Knowledge Among Adolescents and Young Adults. Research Letter.**
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2817958> April 22, 2024
- **Behavioral Health Parity—Pervasive Disparities in Access to In-Network Care Continue.**
<https://www.rti.org/publication/behavioral-health-parity-pervasive-disparities-access-network-care-continue> April 17, 2024
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- **States Seek Ways to Keep Veterans Out of the Criminal Justice System**
<https://www.governing.com/policy/states-seek-ways-to-keep-veterans-out-of-the-criminal-justice-system> March 26, 2024
- **Prison Buprenorphine Implementation and Postrelease Opioid Use Disorder Outcomes.**
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2816405> March 18, 2024
- **Opioid Prescribing and Outcomes in Patients With Sickle Cell Disease Post-2016 CDC Guideline.**
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2816063> March 11, 2024
- **Evidence-based, whole-person care for pregnant people who have opioid use disorder.**
<https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/whole-person-care-pregnant-people-oud-pep23-02-01-002.pdf> March 2024
- **Stronger, longer, better opioid antagonists? Nalmafene is NOT a naloxone replacement.**
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395924000082> February 2024
- **Law enforcement seizures of psilocybin mushrooms rose dramatically between 2017-2022**
<https://nida.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/2024/02/law-enforcement-seizures-of-psilocybin-mushrooms-rose-dramatically-between-2017-2022> February 6, 2024
- **Comparison of Administration of 8-Milligram and 4-Milligram Intranasal Naloxone by Law Enforcement During Response to Suspected Opioid Overdose—New York, March 2022-August 2023.** <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7305a4.htm> February 8, 2024

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