

PRESCRIPTION FOR SUCCESS:



*Statewide Strategies to
Prevent and Treat the
Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic
in Tennessee*



A report produced by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, in conjunction with:



Summer 2014



BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR
STATE OF TENNESSEE

Fellow Tennesseans:

Prescription drug abuse is a serious problem in our state that is devastating to families and our communities. That is why I am pleased agencies across state government have come together to produce Prescription For Success: Statewide Strategies to Prevent and Treat the Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic in Tennessee, a comprehensive, multi-faceted plan to combat the prescription drug abuse problem in our state.

The plan has three major components: a description of the extent of the prescription drug problem in Tennessee, information about how the problem is currently being addressed, and a plan for the future that includes specific, measurable goals that will allow us to determine if the lives of individuals and families in Tennessee have been improved as a result of these efforts. A menu of policy options is provided for the state's leaders to consider as we work to make progress toward these goals.

Combatting prescription drug abuse is aligned with my priorities as Governor. Tennesseans that are drug-free make better and more productive employees, family members and community members. In addition, stemming this epidemic will save our state millions of dollars in incarceration and treatment costs.

This plan requires many state agencies to work together, but there are also ways that individuals and communities can be part of solving this problem. I hope that we all can be part of reducing prescription drug misuse and abuse in our state and that you will find ways to connect with these efforts.

Sincerely,

Governor Bill Haslam

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FORWARD & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Prescription drug abuse is a pervasive, multi-dimensional epidemic that is impacting Tennessee families and communities and requires a coordinated and collaborative response.

Prescription for Success: Statewide Strategies to Prevent and Treat the Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic in Tennessee is a strategic plan developed by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services in collaboration with sister agencies impacted by the prescription drug epidemic. The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following partners: Departments of Health, Children’s Services, Safety and Homeland Security, and Correction, Bureau of TennCare, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, and the Tennessee Branch of the United States Drug Enforcement Agency. Special thanks are extended to the commissioners of each of the partner agencies as well as those people who were interviewed and provided expertise and resources:

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Prescription For Success is comprehensive and multi-year in scope and nature. However, this plan does not obligate the Administration or the General Assembly to any additional funding requests to fulfill this plan’s purpose. Funding requests related to the initiatives in this document will be determined through the normal General Assembly budgeting process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Prescription Drug Epidemic in Tennessee:

Prescription drug abuse is a pervasive, multi-dimensional issue impacting Tennessee individuals, families, and communities. Of the **4,850,000 adults** in Tennessee, it is estimated that **221,000 (or 4.56%) have used pain relievers, also known as prescription opioids, in the past year for non-medical purposes.** Of those adults, it is estimated that **69,100 are addicted to prescription opioids and require treatment for prescription opioid abuse.** The other **151,900 are using prescription opioids in ways that could be harmful and may benefit from early intervention strategies¹.** The remaining 4,629,000 adults in the population would benefit from broad-based prevention strategies that target the entire population.

The abuse of prescription drugs, specifically opioids, is an epidemic in Tennessee, with disastrous and severe consequences to Tennesseans of every age including: overdose deaths, emergency department visits, hospital costs, newborns with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, children in state custody, and people incarcerated for drug-related crimes.

Current Efforts to Combat the Prescription Drug Epidemic:

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is designated as the Single State Authority for issues regarding mental health and substance abuse services, and has responsibility for setting a direction and leading coordinated efforts to address the prescription drug epidemic in Tennessee. Across the state, there are a number of current efforts already in place to combat the prescription drug epidemic. Along with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the departments of Health, Safety and Homeland Security, Correction, and Children's Services, and the Bureau of TennCare are engaged in combatting the epidemic, along with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The current strategies include work through community level organizations to prevent access to prescription drugs through prescription drug disposal opportunities as well as legislative efforts to improve the utility of the Controlled Substance Monitoring Database by requiring prescribers to report and view the database on a regular basis. In addition, efforts are being made to treat individuals who are addicted to prescription opioids and provide recovery opportunities after they complete treatment.

A Plan for the Future:

The response to prevent and treat prescription drug abuse demands comprehensive and coordinated solutions involving many different state departments. Strategies have been developed to meet the following outcomes:

- 1) Decrease the number of Tennesseans that abuse controlled substances.
- 2) Decrease the number of Tennesseans who overdose on controlled substances.
- 3) Decrease the amount of controlled substances dispensed in Tennessee.
- 4) Increase access to drug disposal outlets in Tennessee.
- 5) Increase access and quality of early intervention, treatment and recovery services.
- 6) Expand collaborations and coordination among state agencies.
- 7) Expand collaboration and coordination with other states.

***Please note: All references to the term "prescription drugs" are referring to controlled or scheduled prescription drugs.**

SUMMARY OF THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG EPIDEMIC IN TENNESSEE

Who Abuses Prescription Drugs?

- In 2012, prescription opioids became the primary substance of abuse for people in Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services-funded treatment, overtaking alcohol for the first time.
- Almost 5% of Tennesseans have used pain relievers in the past year for non-medical purposes.
- Young adults (18-25-year-olds) in Tennessee are using prescription opioids at a 30% higher rate than the national average.

Access to Prescription Drugs

- **High Number of Prescriptions Dispensed**
 - There were 25% more controlled substances dispensed in Tennessee in 2012 than in 2010.
- **Doctor Shopping**
 - In March 2013, 2,010 people received prescriptions for opioids or benzodiazepines from four or more prescribers.
- **Prescribing Practices**
 - As of August 1, 2013, 25 physicians had been prosecuted for overprescribing during 2013.
- **Sources of Prescription Drugs**
 - More than 70% of people who use prescription drugs for non-medical reasons got them from a friend or relative.

Consequences of Prescription Drug Abuse

- **Healthcare Costs**
 - The number of emergency department visits for prescription drug poisoning has increased by approximately 40% from 2005 to 2010.
- **Overdose Deaths**
 - There has been a 220% increase in the number of drug overdose deaths from 1999 to 2012 (342 in 1999 to 1,094 in 2012).
- **Criminal Justice System Involvement**
 - Drug-related crimes against property, people and society have increased by 33% from 2005 to 2012.
- **Lost Productivity**
 - The cost of lost productivity due to prescription drug abuse in Tennessee was \$142.9 million in 2008. This number adjusted for 2013 inflation is \$155.2 million.
- **Children in State Custody**
 - About 50% of the youth taken into Department of Children's Services custody resulted from parental drug use.
- **Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome**
 - Over the past decade, we have seen a nearly ten-fold rise in the incidence of babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome in Tennessee.
- **Treatment Costs**
 - It is estimated that the cost of providing state-funded treatment services to individuals that abuse prescription drugs and live below the poverty level would cost \$27,933,600.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT EFFORTS TO COMBAT THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG EPIDEMIC IN TENNESSEE

Prevention	
<p>Collaborative Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Public Safety Subcabinet Strategies • Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Subcabinet Workgroup • Substance Abuse Data Taskforce <p>Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Prevention Coalitions • Prescription Drug Disposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take-backs ○ Permanent Drop Boxes • Information Dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Take Only As Directed” Media Campaign • Strategic Prevention Framework State Prevention Enhancement Grant 	<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled Substance Monitoring Database Pain Clinic Oversight • Drug Overdose Reporting • Development of Guidelines for Prescribing Narcotics • Top 50 Prescribers <p>Safety and Homeland Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Public Safety Subcabinet Strategies <p>Drug Enforcement Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day <p>Bureau of TennCare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulary Regulations • Pharmacy Lock-In Program • Prescriber Identification
Early Intervention	
<p>Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment 	<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment
Enforcement	
<p>Safety and Homeland Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Enforcement Access to Controlled Substances • State Trooper Training <p>Bureau of Investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicaid Fraud Control • Forensic Services • Methamphetamine and Pharmaceutical Task Force <p>Drug Enforcement Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Enforcement Administration Requirements • Diversion Investigations
Treatment	
<p>Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Continuum of treatment services provided to indigent people • Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Funded Treatment • Recovery (Drug) Courts • Residential Recovery Court • Community Treatment Collaborative • Community Housing with Intensive Outpatient Services • Medication Assisted Therapies <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaired Healthcare Professionals Program <p>Safety and Homeland Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Public Safety Subcabinet Strategies 	<p>Correction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Abuse Therapeutic Community • Substance Abuse Group Therapy • Technical Violators Diversion Program • Community Treatment Collaborative • Co-occurring Treatment • Residential Recovery Court <p>Children’s Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment Services for youth and young adults in Custodial Care • Treatment for babies born addicted to substances <p>Bureau of TennCare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts with Managed Care Organizations to provide a comprehensive continuum of substance abuse services
Recovery	
<p>Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery Support Services • Low Cost/High Impact Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oxford House Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lifeline ○ Community Housing with Intensive Outpatient Services