Prescription drug task force combats opioid use, misuse and abuse

PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE
Every 25 minutes in the U.S., someone dies from a prescription drug overdose (PDO). PDO deaths are largely related to increased opioid prescribing and use—including non-medical use—over the last 20 years.

- Even though the U.S. has only 5% of the world’s population, over 80% of opioid prescriptions are written here—enough annually to medicate every American adult around the clock for a month (CDC).
- For each prescription opioid overdose death, there are 10 treatment admissions and 32 non-fatal emergency department visits for misuse or abuse.
- Prescription opioid abuse costs more than $55 billion each year in health care and criminal justice costs and lost productivity.

Indiana:
- ranked 16th among states in 2011 for number of PDO deaths, and
- experienced a 500% increase in number of PDO deaths between 1999 and 2009.

PROGRAM
The Indiana Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Task Force was established in 2011 as a joint initiative between the Office of the Indiana Attorney General and the Indiana State Department of Health to:
- advance legislation to combat PDO,
- create awareness and provide education,
- inform the prescribing behaviors of physicians to appropriately treat chronic pain, focusing on improving function, and
- improve access to treatment for those suffering from addiction.

The Task Force includes state legislators, law enforcement, health officials, healthcare providers, pharmacists, state and local agencies, education providers, and consumers affected by PDO.

IMPACT
The Task Force’s work reflects the 4 major areas of the national Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan:
- Education: The Task Force created a toolkit to support administrative code regulating the use of opioids for chronic, non-terminal pain. A website and public service announcements were launched. Over 2,700 healthcare providers have also attended education programs.
- Monitoring: The Task Force secured funding for the ongoing operation of INSPECT, the state’s prescription drug monitoring program.
- Medication Disposal: Information on proper disposal and a list of “take back” sites in the state are posted on the website.
- Enforcement: Legislation was passed that required licensure of pain clinic owners. In addition, the Task Force addresses treatment and recovery, including liability protection for responders who use naloxone on PDO victims.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAM FEATURED ABOVE
www.bitterpill.in.gov

20 Lives Saved
To mark its recent 20th anniversary, the Safe States Alliance is highlighting 20 of the many lives saved through injury and violence prevention over the last two decades. These examples show the significant impact that injury and violence prevention has on the lives of real people, every day.

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