

In 2014, Governor Bill Haslam dubbed prescription drug abuse a serious problem in Tennessee, devastating families and communities. Consequences we are seeing include record numbers of overdose deaths, more and more babies born addicted, children in state custody, job loss, and incarceration. To combat the problem, state agencies came together, created a strategic plan, and got to work.

The collaborative effort, *Prescription for Success: Statewide Strategies to Prevent and Treat the Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic in Tennessee*, included seven primary goals. Below are highlights of what has been accomplished as of June 2017.

# Prescription for Success



## **Goal 1: Fewer Tennesseans abusing controlled substances**

- Reduced doctor shopping by 63% from 2011-2016<sup>1</sup>.
- Funded 10 additional anti-drug coalitions for a total of 42 funded coalitions.
- Decreased prescription opioid seizures by 25% between 2012 and 2016<sup>2</sup>.
- Increased prevention efforts by reaching 6 million Tennesseans through the “Take Only as Directed” ad campaign.

## **Goal 2: Reduce the number of Tennesseans who overdose on controlled substances**

- The Tennessee General Assembly passes the:
  - Controlled Substances Scheduling Act of 2015 to keep the list of controlled substances up-to-date.
  - Addiction Treatment Act of 2015 includes a Good Samaritan Law assuring people helping others are not charged with a crime.
  - T.C.A. § 63-1-152(b) allows for an open prescription of Naloxone, an opioid antagonist, used for the complete or partial reversal of overdose.
  - T.C.A. § 63-1-152(h) provides certain immunity to health care providers who prescribe, administer, or dispense Naloxone.

## **Goal 3: Reduce the amount of controlled substances dispensed**

- Identified the top 50 prescribers of opioids in Tennessee annually.
- Distributed Chronic Pain Guidelines to all medical practitioners.
- Decreased opioid prescriptions for pain by 805,208 from 2013 to 2016<sup>1</sup>.
- The Tennessee General Assembly:
  - Repealed the Intractable Pain Act in 2015.
  - Passed the Tennessee Prescription Safety Acts of 2012 and 2016.
  - Passed legislation that requires pain management clinics to be licensed by the TN Department of Health.
- Increased licensing requirements for pain clinics.

## **Goal 4: Increase access to drug collection boxes**

- Increased the number of permanent prescription drug collection boxes from 36 boxes in 2012 to 230 in 2017. All 95 counties have at least one collection box.
- Tennessee Highway Patrol works with law enforcement to properly dispose of medications collected in drug collection boxes.
- The Tennessee General Assembly passes the Ensuring Patient Access to Pharmacy Drug Disposal Programs Act of 2015, allowing pharmacies to participate in drug collection programs.

Sources: (1) *Controlled Substances Monitoring Database Annual Report 2017*; (2) *Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and Metro Nashville Crime Lab laboratory data, 2012-2016*. Revised 12/12/2017.

# Prescription for Success

## **Goal 5: Increase access to and quality of early intervention, treatment, and recovery services**

- Increased funding to 53 recovery courts for people with substance use and mental disorders; nine new courts are planned.
- Increased recovery court enrollees 179% from 1,405 in 2013 to 3,919 in June 2017.
- Conducted over 43,000 Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) screenings in clinics, health departments, and medical practices statewide between January 2012 and February 2017.
- Increased funding to expand the number of Oxford Houses which provide 56 sober homes with 399 beds for people in recovery.
- Conducted 2,466 Lifeline recovery trainings, established 330 new recovery meetings, and referred 1,600 people to treatment.
- Certified 200 faith-based "Recovery Congregations/Organizations."



## **Goal 6: Expand collaborations among state agencies**

- Transformed the Substance Abuse Data Taskforce to become a State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) to collect data from various state agencies to better understand the comprehensive nature of substance abuse.

Established: Governor's Opioid Working Group, Opioid and Overdose Advisory Council, and the Opioid and Prescription Drug Task Force.

## **Goal 7: Expand collaborations among states**

- Formalized agreements with Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Dakota, Virginia, West Virginia and South Carolina to share data from the Controlled Substance Monitoring Databases.



## What's next?

While we are seeing changes in the use of opioids in Tennessee, there is still work to do. We will continue working on the plan to: decrease the use and misuse of controlled substances, reduce overdoses, increase the number of drug disposal boxes so that each county has access to dispose of their medications properly, and increase access to early intervention, treatment, and recovery services. As long as Tennesseans are under the grip of substance abuse, we will continue to work together so that all Tennesseans are healthy and safe.



Prescription for Success was developed by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services in conjunction with: Tennessee's Departments of Health, Children's Services, Correction, Safety & Homeland Security, TennCare, TBI, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.