

TN Together

A comprehensive plan to end the opioid crisis in Tennessee

TN Together is a multi-faceted plan, comprised of legislation, \$30 million (state and federal funds) through Governor Haslam's proposed 2018-19 budget and other executive actions to attack the state's opioid epidemic through three major components: 1) Prevention, 2) Treatment and 3) Law Enforcement.

Prevention

- Through reasonable limits and appropriate exceptions, decreases supply and dosage of prescription opioids – initial opioid prescriptions will be limited to a three-day supply
- Limits coverage of opioids for TennCare enrollees to an initial five-day supply at maximum daily dosage amounts
- Increases prevention education for elementary and secondary schools through revisions to the state's health education academic standards
- Implements a public awareness campaign to raise awareness about the potential dangers of opioid use and provides resources and support to those struggling with addiction
- Identifies women of childbearing age who are chronic opioid users and provides targeted outreach about risks, contraception and treatment in order to aid in the prevention of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) births
- Establishes a commission to formulate current, evidenced-based pain and addiction medicine competencies for adoption by medical and health practitioner schools
- Creates a collaborative of health care stakeholders to study, formulate and implement best practices around pain management

Treatment

- Provides more than \$25 million in funding (state and federal) for treatment and recovery services for individuals with opioid use disorder. Funding services will include:
 - Recovery services for individuals without existing means to acquire treatment;
 - Expansion of staffing of peer recovery specialists in targeted, high-need emergency departments; and
 - Supplying Naltrexone in the state's recovery courts and through a voluntary county jail treatment pilot project to decrease opioid dependence and the risk of overdose
- Ensures TennCare members with opioid use disorder have access to high-quality treatment options
- Improves data access and sharing to better and more timely identify critical hotspots for targeting resources and to increase information about patient and community risks
- Creates a statewide public/private treatment collaborative to collectively serve Tennesseans who are struggling with opioid addiction
- Within the state's correction facilities, expands residential treatment and services for opioid dependence and creates incentives for offenders to complete intensive substance use treatment programs while incarcerated
- Provides funding to the state's zero to three court programs for transportation needs relative to therapeutic and family support services
- Establishes three recovery compliance courts (one in each grand division) to facilitate accountability in recovery support services for offenders

Law Enforcement

- Increases state funding to attack the illicit sale and trafficking of opioids through additional law enforcement agents and training
- Updates the controlled substance schedules to better track, monitor and penalize the use and unlawful distribution of dangerous and addictive drugs including fentanyl analogues
- Provides every Tennessee state trooper with naloxone for the emergency treatment of opioid overdose prior to paramedic arrival

TN Together Legislation

Each day in Tennessee, at least three people die from an opioid-related overdose, which is more than the number of daily traffic fatalities. Since 1999, the number of opioid-related overdose deaths nationwide, including prescription opioids and heroin, has quadrupled. Tennessee is no exception to this epidemic. While progress is being made through the state's Prescription for Success and Prescription Safety Act, Tennessee remains in the top 15 of all states in drug overdose deaths, and each year, more opioid prescriptions are written than there are people living in Tennessee, with more than 1 million prescriptions left over. This epidemic does not discriminate and knows no boundaries. It devastates families from all walks of life and harms communities across Tennessee. Together, we can and must do better.

This legislation, part of the TN Together plan to attack the state's opioid epidemic, recognizes the work of multiple agencies and stakeholders, and with the governor's proposed 2018-19 budget and other executive actions, aggressively and comprehensively addresses the issue through three major components: 1) Prevention, 2) Treatment and 3) Law Enforcement.

Prevention

The legislation seeks to prevent opioid addiction, and ultimately, misuse and abuse by limiting the supply and dosage of initial opioid prescriptions to three days at a dosage of no more than 180 morphine milligram equivalents. Higher dosages of opioids have been associated with higher risk of overdose and death while proving ineffective at reducing pain over the long term. The legislation also addresses appropriate exceptions, including exceptions for individuals undergoing active or palliative cancer treatment or who are receiving hospice care for chronic pain.

Treatment

Along with a proposed, research-based increased investment in the 2018-19 budget of more than \$25 million (state and federal funds) for treatment and recovery services for individuals with opioid use disorder, the legislation provides incentives for offenders in correctional facilities to complete intensive substance use treatment programs while incarcerated. An increasing number of offenders suffer from substance use disorders. These evidence-based programs are proven to reduce recidivism and improve lives while saving taxpayer dollars.

Law Enforcement

In addition to proposed resources in the 2018-19 budget to attack the illicit sale and trafficking of opioids, the legislation updates the schedule of controlled substances to better track, monitor and penalize the use and unlawful distribution of dangerous and addictive drugs, including substances that mimic the effects of fentanyl, a drug that is up to 100 times more potent than morphine and is linked to an alarming number of overdose deaths.

Through this multifaceted approach, Tennessee can be successful in its continued fight against the opioid epidemic and reverse the addiction, overdose and illicit distribution trends that continue to plague the state and nation.