The Opioid Epidemic: Using Science and Innovation to Improve our Response

By Jessica Hulsey Nickel
President & CEO
Addiction Policy Forum
The Problem

Substance abuse has had a devastating impact on families in the United States.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 144 people per day die of drug overdoses while admissions to treatment for prescription opiates has increased 500 percent.

We can do better.

In 2015, 21.7 million people in the United States needed substance use disorder treatment, but only 11% received it.

Over 23 million Americans are in recovery from addiction to alcohol & other drugs.

Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to our Nation, exacting more than $700 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care.

Fifty percent of people incarcerated are classified as being dependent on drugs.
Abbey was one of the 144 people who die in our country each day from a drug overdose.

We can change this national epidemic. Find resources at 144aDay.org for addiction prevention, treatment, recovery support, and advocacy.
Dillan and Matthew were two of the 144 people who die in our country each day from a drug overdose.

We can change this national epidemic. Find resources at 144aDay.org for addiction prevention, treatment, recovery support, and advocacy.
The Addiction Policy Forum is a diverse partnership of organizations, policymakers and stakeholders committed to working together to elevate awareness around addiction and to improve national policy through a comprehensive response that includes prevention, treatment, recovery and criminal justice reform.

We envision a world where fewer lives are lost and help exists for the millions of Americans affected by addiction every day.
How do we respond to a DISEASE?

1. Reduce the number of individuals that contract the disease.
2. Early detection and intervention/treatment for those diagnosed.
3. Improve survival rates.
Cancer & Diabetes
Two comparisons
Children at Risk
Understanding risk and protection

At the individual level, risks include lack of parental monitoring, unstable home, lack of attachment to your community or school and early onset of use of alcohol, marijuana or other drugs.

High risk environments include high drug availability, normalizing alcohol and drug use so adolescents feel like it’s normal behavior, poverty and crime.

Family studies suggest that as much as half of a person’s risk of becoming addicted to nicotine, alcohol, or other drugs depends on his or her genetic makeup.
Understanding Risk and Protection

• Risk
  • Genetic disposition
  • Prenatal alcohol exposure
  • Parents who use drugs and alcohol or who suffer from mental illness
  • Child abuse and maltreatment
  • Inadequate supervision
  • Neighborhood poverty and violence
  • Norms and laws favorable to substance use
  • Adverse Childhood Experiences

• Protection
  • Parental involvement
  • Health peer involvement
  • Availability of faith-based resources
  • After-school activities
  • Policies limiting the availability of alcohol
  • Attachment
  • Pro-social engagement
  • Connectedness to adults outside of family
6 Key Elements of a Comprehensive Response

**Criminal Justice Reform**
Provide evidence-based treatment in the jails and prisons and expand alternatives to incarceration to treat individuals in communities.

**Law Enforcement**
Improve coordination between law enforcement and the treatment community so police can better connect individuals with substance use disorders to drug treatment.

**Prevention**
Expand prevention and education efforts aimed at teens, parents, other caretakers.

**Treatment**
Expand evidence-based treatment nationwide including medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

**Overdose Reversal**
Expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies, first responses and families to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives.

**Recovery Support**
Expand recovery services to support individuals in recovery, including resources in high schools, institutions of higher learning, and nonprofit organizations.
Effective Treatment
Opioid Use Disorder Affects Millions

Over 2.5 million Americans suffer from opioid use disorder. Use of opioids, including heroin and prescription pain relievers, can lead to neonatal abstinence syndrome as well as the spread of infectious diseases like HIV and Hepatitis.

Medications, including buprenorphine, methadone, and extended release naltrexone are effective for the treatment of opioid use disorders.

Medications should be combined with behavioral counseling for a "whole patient" approach, known as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).

MAT decreases opioid use, opioid-related overdose deaths, criminal activity, and infectious disease transmission. After buprenorphine became available in Baltimore, heroin overdose deaths decreased by 37 percent.

RP Mattick et al. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (2009)
# 18 Things You Can Do
To Address Addiction in Your Community

## Prevention
1. Parent training
2. Implement curriculum in each school
3. Prescription guidelines to PCP’s, dentists, etc.
4. Child Welfare Intervention Programs
5. RX – Safe Storage and Destruction
6. Join your community coalition
7. Take on Social Hosting

## Treatment
8. Treatment Assessment
9. Resources for families in crisis
10. Advertise local resources and supports; link to 411; community outreach
11. Ensure MAT is available in your community
12. Implement Student Assistance and Employee Assistance
13. Naloxone +
14. Naloxone training & supply

## Overdose Reversal
18 Things You Can Do
To Address Addiction in Your Community

**Recovery Support**

15. Recovery Assessment

16. Use Technology

17. Implement and expand programming

**Criminal Justice**

18. Support interventions at each point of intersection in criminal justice
KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US
Addiction Policy Forum

www.addictionpolicy.org

/addictionpolicy
@AddictionPolicy
THANK YOU

Question ?