

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: ANALYSIS OF OPIOID PREVENTION STRATEGIES

1

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to evaluate current and proposed programs aimed at opioid overdose prevention and intervention. An analysis of local and state level programs will determine the effectiveness of overdose prevention strategies and the long-term impact on target populations.

Opioid addiction has revealed itself to be one of the deadliest drug crises in American History. Opioid addiction can be significantly attributed to the overuse of prescription and non-prescription opioid drugs without surveillance to prevent dependency. According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine 591,000 Americans had a substance use disorder involving heroin. Out of those 591,000 people 23 percent develop an opioid addiction. Public health departments across all 50 states are developing drug overdose prevention programs in response to the nationwide epidemic. The Illinois Department of Health and Human Services reported that there were 2,768 overdose deaths with eighty percent being opioid related. Under the 21st Century Cures Act, Illinois received \$16.3 million in grant funding from the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). On September 6th, 2017, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner signed an executive order that created an opioid overdose prevention and intervention task force. In Southern Illinois the rates of opioid overdose have increased drastically within the past seven years. The Illinois Department of Public Health revealed that the top three counties with the greatest increases in overdose deaths between 2010 and 2015 were Bond County at 634%, Randolph County at 571%, and Jackson County at 509%. State and local government have passed bills to help with prevention such as physicians who have mid-level providers who work under their practice to register. However, only one provider has complied with this law. It is imperative that health providers follow the precedence set by the state and assume their role in countering opioid addiction.

As the state implements multiple strategies for combating the opioid epidemic, critical questions to answer are: How can these programs intervene and correct behaviors before it becomes life-threatening? How can health providers improve patient oversight when prescribing prescriptions? How can the state increase access for treatment programs for those that are affected by the opioid epidemic?

Keywords: opioid, Illinois, prevention