

PLANK 2 - ALIGNING INCENTIVES FOR PROVIDERS

RESOLUTION 2.02:

PROMOTE POLICIES THAT REDUCE OPIOID MISUSE AND ADDICTION

According to the National Academy of Sciences, rates of opioid use disorder and deaths attributable to opioid use have both risen much faster in the United States over the past two decades than in other countries. Opioid misuse has led to tens of thousands of untimely deaths, with more than 90 Americans dying every day from opioid overdose. The breadth and depth of this epidemic have generated important conversations among federal and state policymakers and stakeholders across all sectors of society about the need to dramatically reduce the prescribing of opioids and increase the availability of substance use disorder treatment.

From the employer perspective, opioid misuse and other substance use disorders contribute significantly to absenteeism, lost productivity at work and workplace accidents. In addition, employees who overuse or become addicted to opioid medications experience health care costs that may be as much as twice that of a typical employee.

While rates of non-medical use of opioids are rising, it remains the case that opioid addiction, misuse and overdose most commonly begin with a prescription for opioid painkillers. The Alliance supports policies that align the regulation of all prescribers, including physicians, advance practice nurses, dentists and veterinarians with emerging evidence on safe and effective use of medicines that control pain. The Alliance also recognizes that providers need timely access to information on opioid prescriptions in light of the rapidly shifting landscape of prescription opioid abuse.

The Alliance calls on policymakers to adopt policies to control opioid misuse, including requiring compliance with the latest federal and state opioid prescribing guidelines and requiring compliance with prescription drug monitoring programs. The Alliance supports mechanisms to hold prescribers and pharmacies accountable if they fail to comply with these guidelines and programs.

The Alliance also encourages federal and state policymakers and regulators to adopt policies that facilitate information sharing among prescribers and pharmacies so that opioid prescribing patterns, and any inappropriate drug seeking by consumers, can be more easily monitored.

Source:

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. Pain Management and the Opioid Epidemic: Balancing Societal and Individual Benefits and Risks of Prescription Opioid Use. Retrieved from <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/24781/pain-management-and-the-opioid-epidemic-balancing-societal-and-individual>