

Cody L. Phinney, MPH  
Administrator

Leon Ravin, M.D.  
Acting Medical Health Officer



Contact Name: Martha Framsted  
Phone Number: 775.684.3211  
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## Division of Public and Behavioral Health NEWS RELEASE

### Nevada continues to combat prescription drug abuse

*Carson City* – The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health has received almost a million dollars from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Prescription Drug Overdose: Prevention for States* program to be used through 2019 to implement the data and surveillance components of the strategic action plan of the State of Nevada's Plan to Reduce Prescription Drug Abuse. This plan will improve safe prescribing practices and better address prescription drug misuse and overdose. These data will then be used to "tell the story," direct interventions, and track performance. Ongoing surveillance will allow for the ability to redirect resources if evaluation shows an intervention is not yielding success.

This project will also allow Nevada to implement a Prescriber Report Card program to assist in identifying high-risk prescribing activity by geographic area and provider specialty. This will better inform and educate Nevada's prescribers on their habits. These efforts will ultimately serve to support policy and resource decisions statewide to "move the needle" on this issue.

This funding comes after the ground-breaking policy changes of Senate Bill 459 which contained several policy changes addressing prescription drug abuse including mandating Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) registration by all prescribing providers and mandated PMP look up prior to prescribing, Good Samaritan provision, and increased use for Naloxone.

Prescription drug misuse is a severe and growing issue in Nevada. Nevada has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest drug overdose mortality rate in the United States, with 20.7 per 100,000 people suffering drug overdose fatalities, according to *Prescription Drug Abuse: Strategies to Stop the Epidemic*. According to the same report, the number of drug overdose deaths - a majority of which are from prescription drugs - in Nevada increased by 80 percent since 1999 when the rate was 11.5 per 100,000. The 2013 Nevada Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) found that 19.4 percent of high school respondents reported that they have taken prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription. In addition to drug use and overdose mortality, Nevada ranks very high in prescribing patterns. Per units prescribed per 100,000 patients:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> highest for hydrocodone (Vicodin and Lortab);
- 2<sup>nd</sup> highest for oxycodone (Percodan and Percocet);
- 4<sup>th</sup> highest for methadone; and,
- 7<sup>th</sup> highest for codeine.

Nevada's participation in the Prevention for States program is an integral part of CDC's ongoing efforts in scaling up prevention activities as part of a national response to the opioid overdose epidemic. Prevention for States provides resources and support to advance comprehensive state-level interventions  
(More)



  
FOR CODY PHINNEY  
Cody L. Phinney, MPH, Administrator

4150 Technology Way, Suite 300 Carson City, Nevada 89706  
Phone (775) 684-4200, Fax (775) 684-4211  
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for preventing prescription drug overuse, misuse, abuse, and overdose. The 29 states participating include: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

For additional information about Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention for States, see [http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/states/state\\_prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/states/state_prevention.html).

For more information about the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, go to <http://dpbh.nv.gov/>.

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