

## April 5, 2018: State Advocacy Update

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### Chair of AMA Opioid Task Force details steps needed to end the opioid epidemic

Patrice A. Harris, MD, chair of the American Medical Association's Opioid Task Force, spoke at the nation's largest drug abuse summit, the National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit, on April 3 in Atlanta. During her session, "More PDMPs, More CME, Fewer Opioids—So Why Is the Epidemic Worse?" Dr. Harris detailed critical steps policymakers must take in order to end the nation's ongoing opioid epidemic.

"Physicians are leading a significant effort to end the opioid epidemic, fueling increased use of prescription drug monitoring programs, reducing opioid prescriptions by more than 22 percent since 2013, and increasing co-prescribing of naloxone," said Dr. Harris prior to the summit. "The foundation to end the epidemic has been poured. But unless and until policymakers and payers work with us to remove barriers to treatment for pain and substance use disorders, this epidemic will continue. We look forward to highlighting solutions at this Summit."

The Rx Summit is the largest national convention of researchers, health care professionals, and policymakers, who meet in hopes of working together to address the national opioid crisis. Keynote speakers for the conference include President Bill Clinton and United States Surgeon General Jerome M Adams, MD.

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