

## March 4, 2022: State Advocacy Update

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### New Mexico Governor signs harm reduction bill

A new law in New Mexico authorizes the use of fentanyl test strips and other drug checking supplies—important harm reduction measures to save lives from fentanyl-related overdose.

House Bill 52 (PDF), which was strongly supported by the New Mexico Medical Society (NMMS) and the AMA, also provides further support for statewide sterile needle and syringe exchange services.

“H.B. 52 makes changes to the Harm Reduction Act that will make supplies proven to decrease overdose and the spread of disease available statewide. It also allows possession of drug testing devices, like fentanyl test strips legal, which detect the presence of deadly fentanyl in both prescription and illegal drugs,” said New Mexico Representative Tara Lujan, one of the bill’s chief sponsors.

"It is essential to ensure our patients do not overdose unnecessarily, and by decriminalizing fentanyl strips we can avoid the complications that arise when someone takes it unknowingly," testified the NMMS during committee hearings.

The NMMS effort aligns with the AMA Substance Use and Pain Care Task Force recommendation to “broaden public health and harm reduction strategies to save lives from overdose, limit the spread of infectious disease, eliminate stigma and reduce harms for people who use drugs and other substances.” The NMMS is part of the task force.

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