Physicians’ progress to reverse the nation’s opioid epidemic
Opioid prescriptions continue to decline nationwide

Between 2012 and 2016, the number of opioid prescriptions decreased by more than 43 million—a 16.9 percent decrease nationally. Every state saw a decrease in opioid prescriptions during this time period.¹

America’s physicians and health care professionals are using state PDMPs more than ever

Physicians’ and other health care professionals’ registrations with state-based prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) grew from 471,896 in 2014 to 1,322,996 in 2016—marking a 180 percent increase.²

Physicians and other health care professionals used state PDMPs more than 136.1 million times in 2016—a 121 percent increase from 2014.³

Sources: CDC, Quintiles IMS

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¹ Xponent, QuintilesIMS, Danbury, CT Copyright 2017
² Based on AMA survey and responses from 45 state PDMP administrators. Figures will be adjusted as new information becomes available.
³ Based on AMA survey and responses from 44 state PDMP administrators. Figures will be adjusted as new information becomes available.
America’s medical community continues to focus on ways to prevent overdoses, and the AMA Opioid Task Force recently issued recommendations encouraging physicians to:

- Talk to your patients about proper use of opioid analgesics
- Remind your patients to safely store medicines away from children and never share prescriptions
- Urge your patients to safely dispose of expired, unwanted, and unused medications, utilizing pharmacy and law enforcement “Take Back” resources

Access to life-saving naloxone improves and co-prescriptions increase

Due to physicians’ nationwide advocacy for improving access to naloxone, nearly all 50 states now have naloxone access laws. The data also shows increasing access to naloxone through co-prescribing and standing orders:

- In the second quarter of 2015, 4,291 naloxone prescriptions were dispensed, a 1,170 percent increase over prescriptions in the fourth quarter of 2013.\(^4\)

- In the first two months of 2017, 32,659 naloxone prescriptions were dispensed, noting a record 340 percent increase from 2016.\(^5\)

More physicians are educated on safe opioid prescribing and treatment than ever before

Recognizing the need to enhance their education, more than 118,550 physicians accessed, attended or completed continuing medical education and other courses offered by the AMA, state and specialty societies on opioid prescribing, pain management, addiction and related areas in 2015 and 2016.\(^6\)

118,550 PHYSICIANS COMPLETED COURSES ON OPIOID PRESCRIBING, PAIN MANAGEMENT, ADDICTION, AND OTHER RELATED AREAS IN 2015 AND 2016

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6. Based on AMA survey and responses from 50 state and medical society representatives.
Number of physicians certified to provide office-based medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders rises

There are now 37,637 physicians—a 27 percent increase in the past 12 months—certified to provide office-based medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders across all 50 states. To help ensure patients receive care, however, health insurance companies, Medicaid, and other payers must now remove administrative barriers, such as prior authorization for medication-assisted treatment.

These are good signs of progress, but to truly reverse the nation’s opioid epidemic, we all have much more work to do. That’s why the AMA Opioid Task Force urges physicians to increase their efforts and use PDMPs, enhance their education, help prevent overdose deaths by co-prescribing naloxone, and improve access to the best treatment options available.

—Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA, chair, Board of Trustees, AMA

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In just the past year, more than 10,000 physicians have become certified to provide office-based medication-assisted treatment to their patients who have an opioid use disorder.

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<th>30 Cert</th>
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<th>%</th>
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7. SAMHSA, as of April 2017