

Our goal is to provide information to representatives regarding matters related to substance abuse, prevention, and treatment. Our coalition includes PMP (Prevention Means Progress), TFS (Tobacco Free Sarpy County), LiveWise, NFC (Nebraska Families Collaborative), NUIHC (Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition), ABH (Addiction & Behavioral Health), MOTAC (Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition), Boys Town, The Purple Project, Keystone Treatment Center, receives technical assistance from Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare, and is always adding to our membership.

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Nebraska received a grant from the CDC in September to enhance its prescription drug monitoring program (referred to from here on as a PDMP). LEARN has been presenting information about the prescription drug abuse problems in Nebraska and how PDMP's in other states have helped with those problems. LEARN's members have been working with Ne-Hii (Nebraska Health Information Initiative), the Nebraska Pharmacy Association, the PDMP Center of Excellence, a number of agencies and organizations in the behavioral health field, and other key stakeholders to gather more information and data about what will be most effective for Nebraska to reduce prescription drug abuse. With all of that information in mind, here are the recommendations:

- **Require all dispensers of controlled substances to report these to the PDMP.** In addition to pharmacies, this would include mail order pharmacies, physicians' and dentists' offices, hospice care facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, Emergency Rooms, veterinarian clinics, Indian Health Services, and Veteran's Affairs. Any exemptions or loopholes in this reporting could potentially result in continued abuse of those substances.
- **Ensure that patients do not have an option to opt-out from the database.** This will prevent people that are



abusing or selling prescriptions from choosing not to be tracked.

- **Require prescribers to check the database before prescribing a controlled substance.** Requiring authorized health care practitioners (prescribers and pharmacists) to access PDMP information regarding their patients' use of controlled substances will assist them in determining appropriate treatment options and to improve the quality of patient care

- **Allow law enforcement to have access to the database.** In states like California, Texas, and New York, law enforcement has had access for years. This has led to these states having the lowest number of overdoses and deaths from overdose. In surrounding states where law enforcement does not have access, the reduction in deaths and overdoses has not been as drastic. Law enforcement access is typically assigned to a selected number of officers, and audits can be done to make sure that their access is not abused.

- **Ensure that all pharmacies and health care practitioners have access to and training on how to use the database.** LEARN's recommendation is that this be reported in either real time or every 24 hours.

- **Create a sustainability plan** so that after the CDC grant money is gone, Nebraska will still have a functional PDMP



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS