

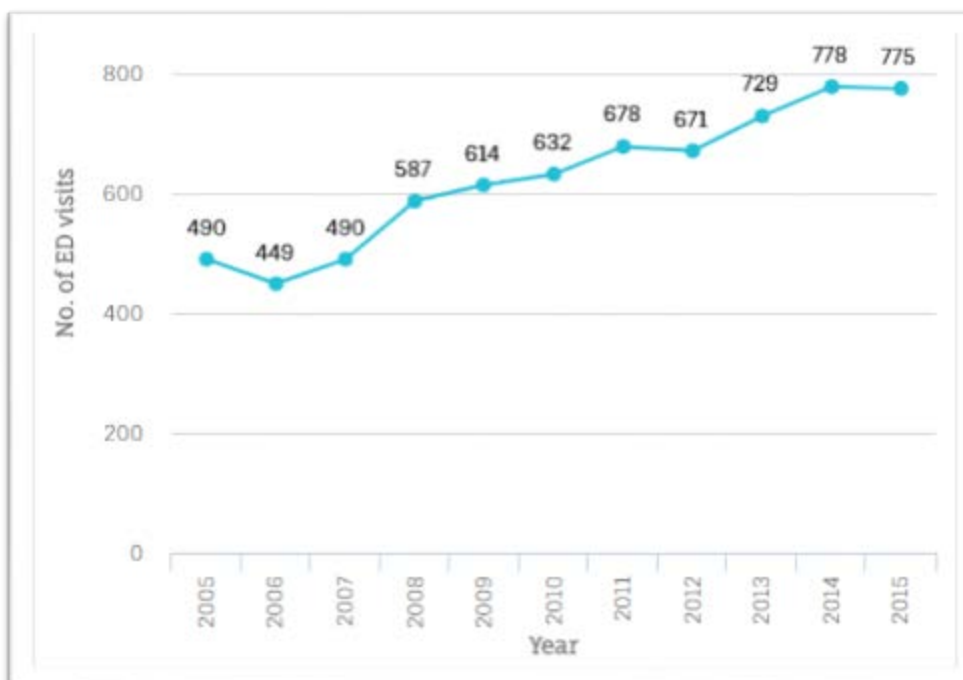
## OPIOID ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

### Key Trends

- California had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of drug overdose deaths in the nation, 4,654 in 2016; the age-adjusted state mortality rate of 11 deaths per 100,000 people, however, was lower than the U.S. rate overall, 19.8.<sup>1</sup>
- In LA County, an average of 400 deaths per year from 2006-2012 were associated with a positive test for prescription opioids.
- On average, individuals who died from drug overdoses died 31 years prematurely.
- Hospitalizations and emergency department visits related to opioid diagnoses have increased 30% and 171%, respectively, between 2006-2013, with a substantial increase in costs associated with hospitalizations from opioid diagnoses.
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, the prevalence rate of misusing/abusing opioids in the past year in LA County is 4.8%, which is higher than the national average (4.5%).



### Prescription Opioid Overdose-Related Emergency Department Visits in LA County, 2005 – 2015



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug\\_poisoning\\_mortality/drug\\_poisoning.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug_poisoning_mortality/drug_poisoning.htm)

## Opioid Prevention in LA County

DPH has developed a broad, multifaceted, and coordinated opioid prevention strategy in LA County to reduce the toll of the opioid crisis on LA County residents and maximize health and well-being. Goals are to prevent opioid use, stop deaths from overdoses, and provide easy access to treatment programs. The following intervention opportunities support these goals and build upon initiatives underway.

### Public Messaging Campaigns

- DPH is currently working to develop and launch targeted and data-driven public messaging campaigns to enhance community awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and the opioid epidemic. Campaigns include school-based strategies and utilize a range of platforms to reach relevant audiences (e.g., print, radio, social media, billboards, messaging on buses/trains)
- The formation of a Youth Advisory Council comprised of youth from a representative selection of communities across the County will inform campaigns and collect feedback and ideas from young people that support positive youth development.

### Funding Community Coalitions

- DPH currently funds 8 community coalitions throughout LA County that promote local policies and alternative activities for high-risk youth and promote protective factors such as school-connectedness/academic competence, family cohesion, self-control, anti-drug use policies, and strong neighborhood attachment.
- Safe Med LA Coalition ([www.SafeMedLA.org](http://www.SafeMedLA.org)) is a countywide, cross-sector coalition focused on the opioid crisis and prescription drug abuse. Safe Med LA's goal is to reduce prescription drug abuse deaths by 20 percent by the year 2020, and targets key drivers of the opioid crisis through community education and training; implementing safe prescribing practices; overdose prevention; ensuring access to naloxone and Medications for Addiction Treatment; safe drug disposal and drug take-back events; policy advocacy, and data exchange/tracking/monitoring. The Coalition is partly funded by a grant from the California Health Care Foundation that is administered by L.A. Care Health Plan. Stakeholders include County agencies, health plans, health providers and organizations, law enforcement, and prevention coalitions, among others. The Coalition has been successful in creating and distributing safe prescribing guidelines on the administration of pain medication in all emergency departments and over 80 urgent care centers throughout LA County.

### Optimizing Utilization of CURES, California's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

- DPH is engaged in efforts to increase the number of prescribers and dispensers who utilize CURES, the State's prescription drug monitoring program, and ensure that local jurisdictions can more meaningfully use the data from CURES to track and provide outreach to those providers whose prescribing practices fall outside of the norm.

### Expanding Access to Naloxone

- First responders and family members of an individual with an opioid use disorder or receiving high doses of opioid pain medications should have access to naloxone and know how to administer it

in case of an overdose. Expanding education, training, and distribution of naloxone would support this need. DPH received and distributed an allocation of intranasal naloxone (total value of about \$400,000) from the California Department of Public Health, and is committed to expanding harm reduction efforts.

- DPH is engaging hospital providers to discuss strategies for ensuring that patients seen in an emergency department for an opioid-related overdose receive naloxone and naloxone training prior to discharge.

### Family Support and Recovery Centers

- Establish *Family Support and Recovery Centers* that offer individuals with substance use disorder and their family members access to culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention and treatment information, naloxone training, and referrals to housing and community resources (e.g., job training, social and legal services, peer-to-peer coaching, and transportation vouchers). Family Support and Recovery Centers could also deliver a variety of evidence-based curricula that are family-centered, strength-based, and focused on skills-building to support individuals and parents in recovery.

## Opioid Treatment in LA County

### Implementation of Expanded Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Benefits

The County began implementing the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Waiver in July 2017, as a component of the State's 1115 Medicaid Waiver. DMC-ODS provides an unprecedented opportunity to expand SUD treatment services to eligible beneficiaries to include withdrawal management, short-term residential treatment, case management, and recovery support services for LA County beneficiaries, including single, childless, and homeless adults.

LA County has increased access to SUD services through multiple entryways:

- 24/7 beneficiary access line; clients interested in seeking SUD treatment are able to call toll-free to receive a brief screening and referral to treatment providers.
- Service and Bed Availability Tool, a web-based tool that provides a dashboard of available SUD services throughout LA County. This tool is available to both providers and the general public to assist in real-time identification of available treatment services and beds.
- LA County has improved access to face-to-face screening and service linkage through Client Engagement and Navigation Services (CENS). Eight CENS area offices and 45 co-located sites across the County (e.g., courts, probation, Sheriff's Department, Health Agency sites) provide assessment and linkage services to county residents.

- ✓ **23,000 residents have been treated** through the expanded DMC-ODS program across the County from July to November 2017
- ✓ **32,000 additional residents anticipated to be enrolled in SUD Services** in the system by December 2018

## Interventions ensuring necessary treatment for opioid use disorders that would build upon the continuum of care in the DMC-ODS system include:

### Recovery High Schools

- *Recovery High Schools* offer youth receiving SUD treatment an opportunity to complete their education in a sober environment that helps to facilitate their recovery. Locating these programs within an existing school would allow the County to dedicate funding for recovery-based support services while leveraging Department of Education-supported educational components.

### College Campuses

- Collaborations with community colleges and universities are critically important in expanding opportunities to prevent and address risky behaviors and addictions among college students. Programs and policies on campuses can reduce opioid misuse, binge drinking, driving under the influence, and illicit drug use.

### Recovery Bridge Housing (RBH) Housing Network

- RBH provides safe, culturally appropriate, and monitored transitional housing options for adults completing SUD treatment.

## Federal Funding for State and Local Action to Prevent Opioid Abuse

- Recent Congressional action in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (H.R. 1625; Pub.L. 115–141) increased investment in the nation’s and state and local response to the opioid epidemic. H.R. 1625 provides \$1 billion in new funding through SAMHSA for grants to States to address the opioid crisis, with a 15 percent set-aside for states with the highest mortality rate related to opioid use disorders.
- H.R. 1625 also provides \$475,579,000, for the CDC’s Opioid Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention (PDOP) Activity for expansion of state prevention activities such surveillance and data collection, better monitoring of prescribing and dispensing practices, Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs), and improved timeliness and quality of data.

## Strategies to Support LA County’s Opioid Prevention and Treatment Initiatives

- Direct funding for large local health departments to address both prevention efforts and reduce the overall numbers of opioid-related deaths.
- Expansion of naloxone education, training, and distribution and other harm reduction measures to prevent overdose.
- Support for innovative local prevention and treatment strategies including school-based prevention and treatment initiatives, community policy change efforts that reduce underage access to illicit drugs and alcohol, targeted media campaigns, improved safe prescribing practices, prescription drug monitoring program improvements, establishing family support and recovery centers, and Recovery Bridge Housing networks.