



American Bridge
Trump Policy Brief: Senate GOP
Health Care Bill & The Opioid
Epidemic

6.27.17

SENATE HEALTH CARE BILL: A STEP BACKWARDS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST OPIOID ADDICTION

Senate Republicans' health care bill makes major cuts to Medicaid, a program that serves as a lifeline for Americans seeking treatment for opioid and other substance abuse disorders. The bill would tie Medicaid to a slower growth index beginning in 2025, dramatically reducing overall funding for the program, and convert its funding mechanism from open-ended to per-capita, which would force states to cut back on services and eligibility. The bill would also allow states to apply for waivers from requirements that insurance plans cover Essential Health Benefits (EHBs), a set of 10 basic health care services including substance abuse treatment.

Although experts fear the opioid epidemic could kill over half a million people over the next ten years, the Senate bill provides a mere \$2 billion to fight it, paired with many billions in cuts to the primary health delivery mechanism to the poor and EHB waivers that could put substance abuse coverage at risk. This paltry sum should be a deal-breaker for many Senate Republicans thinking of giving the legislation their support.

- ✓ Shelley Moore Capito's West Virginia suffers from some of the highest opioid death tolls in the country. Hundreds of West Virginians die from opioid overdoses each year, at a rate 2.5 times higher than the national average.
- ✓ Rob Portman's Ohio had more opioid-related deaths in 2014 than the significantly larger states of California, Florida, and New York. Over 2,500 Ohioans died of opioid overdoses in 2015, making up 4 out of every 5 drug overdose deaths.
- ✓ In 2015, over 1,300 people died of opioid-related deaths in Pat Toomey's Pennsylvania. The crisis is affecting Pennsylvanians of all ages; an 11-year-old in Pittsburgh overdosed in April.
- ✓ In Lisa Murkowski's Alaska, opioid addiction is on the rise. The first few weeks of May 2017 marked a dramatic rise in emergency responses to opioid overdose cases.
- ✓ In 2015, Susan Collins' Maine had more opioid-related deaths than car crash fatalities. Nearly 9 out of 10 drug overdose deaths in Maine that year were opioid-related.
- ✓ In Ron Johnson's Wisconsin, hundreds die each year while thousands are denied treatment under an expanded Medicaid program. If Wisconsin were to expand Medicaid, an additional 120,000 would gain health coverage under the program.
- ✓ In Dean Heller's Nevada, high school students are experimenting with opioids at an alarming rate. Three percent of Nevada high schoolers claim they have used heroin at least once.
- ✓ In Jeff Flake's Arizona, over half of all drug overdose deaths in 2015 were opioid-related. Nearly 700 died that year.

**The Senate GOP Bill Makes Major Cuts To Medicaid, A Lifeline For
Thousands Seeking Treatment For Opioid & Other Substance Abuse
Disorders**

THE SENATE GOP BILL WOULD END THE ACA'S MEDICAID EXPANSION AND MAKE DEEP LONG-TERM CUTS TO THE PROGRAM

The Senate GOP Health Care Bill Would End The ACA's Medicaid Expansion And Make Deep Long-Term Cuts To The Program. According to The Washington Post, "Senate Republicans on Thursday morning plan to release a health-care bill that would curtail federal Medicaid funding, repeal taxes on the wealthy and eliminate funding for Planned Parenthood as part of an effort to fulfill a years-long promise to undo Barack Obama's signature health-care law. [...] The Senate measure would cut off expanded Medicaid funding for states more gradually than the House bill but would enact deeper long-term cuts to the health-care program for low-income Americans." [Washington Post, [6/22/17](#)]

CBO: The BCRA Would Cut \$772 Billion From Medicaid. According to the Congressional Budget Office, "The total deficit reduction that would result from the insurance coverage provisions includes the following amounts (shown in Table 3, at the end of this document): • A reduction of \$772 billion in federal outlays for Medicaid" [Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 1628 Cost Estimate, [6/26/17](#)]

- **By 2026, Medicaid Spending Would Be 26 Percent Lower Compared To The ACA.** According to The New York Times, "But the Congressional Budget Office said that the bill would reduce projected Medicaid spending by a total of \$772 billion in the coming decade, and that the number of people covered by Medicaid in 2026 would be 15 million lower than under current law. In 2026, it said, Medicaid spending would be 26 percent lower than under current law, and enrollment of people under 65 would be 16 percent lower. Beyond 2026, Medicaid enrollment would keep declining compared with what would happen under current law." [New York Times, [6/26/17](#)]

CBO: There Would Be 15 Million Fewer Medicaid Enrollees By 2026 Under The BCRA Than Under Current Law. According to the Congressional Budget Office, "Enrollment in Medicaid would be lower throughout the coming decade, with 15 million fewer Medicaid enrollees by 2026 than projected under current law in CBO's March 2016 baseline (see Figure 4). Some of that decline would be among people who are currently eligible for Medicaid benefits, and some would be among people who CBO projects would, under current law, become eligible in the future as additional states adopted the ACA's option to expand eligibility." [Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 1628 Cost Estimate, [6/26/17](#)]

- **By 2026, Medicaid Enrollment Of People Under 65 Would Be 16 Percent Lower Compared To The ACA.** According to The New York Times, "But the Congressional Budget Office said that the bill would reduce projected Medicaid spending by a total of \$772 billion in the coming decade, and that the number of people covered by Medicaid in 2026 would be 15 million lower than under current law. In 2026, it said, Medicaid spending would be 26 percent lower than under current law, and enrollment of people under 65 would be 16 percent lower. Beyond 2026, Medicaid enrollment would keep declining compared with what would happen under current law." [New York Times, [6/26/17](#)]

The Senate Bill Would Tie Medicaid To A Slower Growth Index Beginning In 2025, Reducing Overall Funding For The Program

Under The Senate Bill, Medicaid Would Be Tied To A Slower Growth Index Beginning In 2025, Reducing Overall Funding For The Program. According to The Washington Post, "Yet the Senate bill is expected to go further than the House version in its approach to cutting Medicaid funding in the future. In 2025, the measure would tie federal spending on the program to an even slower growth index than the one used in the House bill. That move could prompt states to reduce the size of their Medicaid programs." [Washington Post, [6/22/17](#)]

- **CBPP: The Slower Growth Rate Would Cut Medicaid By Hundreds Of Billions Of Dollars Over A Decade, And “Force States To Make Even Deeper And More Damaging Cuts To Medicaid Eligibility, Benefits, And Provider Payments.”** According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “The Senate is reportedly considering lowering the growth rate to general inflation (CPI-U) for all beneficiary groups starting around 2025. This would produce even larger cuts, as CBO projects general inflation to grow by only 2.4 percent a year. We expect this smaller growth rate to raise the federal Medicaid funding cut for states under the per capita cap by hundreds of billions of dollars, compared to the House bill, over the subsequent decade (2027 to 2036). This greater cost shift would force states to make even deeper and more damaging cuts to Medicaid eligibility, benefits, and provider payments than under the House bill.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [6/19/17](#)]
- **Washington Post: “Some Republicans Worry That Such A Move Would Force States To Cut Services Or Coverage, Potentially Leaving Millions Of Low-Income People Without Sufficient Health Care.”** According to The Washington Post, “That provision, a nod to conservative lawmakers led by Sen. Patrick J. Toomey (R-Pa.), risks alienating moderates, including Capito and Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio), who also represents a state that expanded Medicaid under the ACA. Some Republicans worry that such a move would force states to cut services or coverage, potentially leaving millions of low-income people without sufficient health care.” [Washington Post, [6/22/17](#)]

The Senate Bill Would Fund Medicaid On A Per-Capita Basis, Which Could Force States To Make Cuts To Services And Eligibility

The Senate Bill Would Change Medicaid From An Open-Ended Funding Structure To A Per-Capita Funding Structure. According to The Washington Post, “Like the House bill, the Senate measure is expected to make big changes to Medicaid, the program that insures about 74 million elderly and lower-income Americans and was expanded in most states under the ACA. In effect, the revisions would reduce federal spending on the program. The Senate measure would transform Medicaid from an open-ended entitlement to one in which federal funding would be distributed to states on a per capita basis. The Senate measure would also seek to phase out the program’s expansion — although at a more gradual rate than the House version.” [Washington Post, [6/22/17](#)]

- **A Per Capita Funding System Would End The Guarantee Of Coverage For All Eligible Medicaid Enrollees, Subjecting Them To Reductions Or Having Coverage Cut Outright Depending On The Finances Of Their Particular State.** According to the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, “[Current Medicaid Structure:] Health coverage is guaranteed to all eligible Medicaid enrollees, as the federal share adjusts to help states when need grows [Block Grants:] Health coverage can be reduced or cut if the state is short money to cover costs above the block grant amount [Per Capita Caps:] Health coverage can be reduced or cut if the state is short money to cover costs above the capped amount[.]” [Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, [3/7/17](#)]

OVER 1.8 MILLION AMERICANS RECEIVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT UNDER MEDICAID EXPANSION, AND 29% OF EXPANSION BENEFICIARIES SUFFER FROM MENTAL HEALTH OR ADDICTION PROBLEMS

Approximately 1.84 Million Americans Receive Mental Health Or Substance Abuse Treatment Under Medicaid Expansion. According to Business Insider, “Approximately 1.84 million people in the US

are receiving treatment for substance-use disorders or mental illnesses through Medicaid expansion or the ACA's individual insurance marketplace, according to research conducted by Richard Frank, a professor of health economics at Harvard Medical School, and Sherry Glied, a dean at New York University.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

Emily Kaltenbach Of The Drug Policy Alliance Said 29% Of Those Who Benefitted From Medicaid Expansion Have Mental Health Or Addiction Problems. According to Vice, “‘This plan would be a disaster for individuals who are struggling with problematic drug use, currently enrolled in treatment services, or would want to be,’ said Emily Kaltenbach, the Drug Policy Alliance’s senior director of national criminal justice reform strategy. She noted that about 29 percent of the people enrolled in the Medicaid expansion have mental health or addiction problems, and said virtually all of those people could eventually lose health coverage if Congress approves the current version of the Republican plan.” [Vice, [3/9/17](#)]

Those Receiving Treatment For Substance-Abuse Disorders And Mental Illness Through Medicaid Could Lose Approximately \$5.5 Billion Under The BCRA. According to Business Insider, “Approximately 1.84 million people in the US are receiving treatment for substance-use disorders or mental illnesses through Medicaid expansion or the ACA's individual insurance marketplace, according to research conducted by Richard Frank, a professor of health economics at Harvard Medical School, and Sherry Glied, a dean at New York University. Those people would be at risk of losing the approximately \$5.5 billion paid out for treatment through those two avenues of insurance.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

- **Out-Of-Pocket Costs For Consumers In Need Of Substance-Abuse Treatment Could Rise By \$1,333 A Year On Average, And By \$12,261 A Year For “High-Need” Consumers.** According to Business Insider, “An analysis conducted by Eibner and Christopher Whaley, a policy researcher at Rand, found that in places that waive substance-treatment benefits, the out-of-pocket cost for consumers who use those benefits could rise by \$1,333 a year. For ‘high-need’ consumers, like those who need an in-patient stay at a treatment facility, out-of-pocket costs could rise to \$12,261 a year.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

HHS: “If Additional States Chose To Expand Medicaid, Almost 30 Percent Of Those Who Could Gain Coverage Have A Substance Use Or Mental Health Disorder”

HHS: “If Additional States Chose To Expand Medicaid, Almost 30 Percent Of Those Who Could Gain Coverage Have A Substance Use Or Mental Health Disorder.” According to the Department of Health and Human Services, “These data are consistent with other evidence that the ACA’s coverage expansions have been especially important to people with substance use disorders and other behavioral health conditions. For example, ASPE previously estimated that, if additional states chose to expand Medicaid, almost 30 percent⁵ of those who could gain coverage have a substance use or mental health disorder.” [Department of Health and Human Services, “Continuing Progress on the Opioid Epidemic: the Role of the Affordable Care Act,” [1/11/17](#)]

HHS: “Mental Health Disorders Are Among The Most Common Pre-Existing Health Conditions For Which Americans Might Have Been Denied Coverage Or Charged More For Coverage Prior To ACA”

HHS: “Mental Health Disorders Are Among The Most Common Pre-Existing Health Conditions For Which Americans Might Have Been Denied Coverage Or Charged More For Coverage Prior To ACA.” According to the Department of Health and Human Services, “ASPE also recently estimated⁶ that mental health disorders are among the most common pre-existing health conditions for which Americans might have been denied coverage or charged more for coverage prior to ACA.” [Department of Health and

Human Services, “Continuing Progress on the Opioid Epidemic: the Role of the Affordable Care Act,” [1/11/17](#)]

The 5 States With The Highest Rates Of Drug Overdose Deaths – Fueled By The Rise In Opioid-Related Deaths – All Opted To Expand Medicaid Under The ACA

2015: West Virginia, New Hampshire, Kentucky, Ohio, And Rhode Island Had The Highest Rates Of Drug Overdose Deaths, Fueled By Increases In Opioid-Related Deaths. According to the CDC, “Opioids—prescription and illicit—are the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Opioids were involved in 33,091 deaths in 2015, and opioid overdoses have quadrupled since 1999. In 2015, the five states with the highest rates of death due to drug overdose were West Virginia (41.5 per 100,000), New Hampshire (34.3 per 100,000), Kentucky (29.9 per 100,000), Ohio (29.9 per 100,000), and Rhode Island (28.2 per 100,000).” [CDC, accessed [3/10/17](#)]

West Virginia, New Hampshire, Kentucky, Ohio, And Rhode Island All Expanded Medicaid Under The ACA. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, West Virginia, New Hampshire, Kentucky, Ohio, and Rhode Island all “Adopted the Medicaid Expansion” made available by the Affordable Care Act. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [3/10/17](#)]

Four Of The Top 20 States For Opioid Overdoses Would Automatically End Medicaid Expansion Under The Bill

New Hampshire, New Mexico, Michigan, And Indiana Would Automatically End Medicaid Expansion Due To Funding Changes Proposed By The BCRA. According to Business Insider, “The BCRA would phase out the Medicaid expansion established by the Affordable Care Act, which extended the program to those making between 100% to 138% of the federal poverty limit. [...] Further, eight states that chose to expand Medicaid include provisions that would automatically end the expansion if funding changes. Four of those states — New Hampshire, New Mexico, Michigan, and Indiana — are in the top 20 of states with the highest overdose death rates.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

- **Those Four States Ranked In The Top 20 Of States With The Highest Opioid Overdose Death Rates.** According to Business Insider, “Further, eight states that chose to expand Medicaid include provisions that would automatically end the expansion if funding changes. Four of those states — New Hampshire, New Mexico, Michigan, and Indiana — are in the top 20 of states with the highest overdose death rates.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

MEDICAID EXPANSION CUT THE SHARE OF UNINSURED SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER HOSPITALIZATIONS BY 75%

Medicaid Expansion Brought The Uninsured Share Of Substance Use And Health Disorder Hospitalizations Down From 20 Percent In 2013 To 6 Percent In 2014 Across All States For Which Data Is Available. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, “Across all Medicaid expansion states for which data are available, the uninsured share of substance use or mental health disorder hospitalizations plummeted from about 20 percent in 2013 to around 6 percent by the end of 2014. For the 10 Medicaid expansion states with data available through the third quarter of 2015, the uninsured share fell from 20 percent at the end of 2013 to about 5 percent in 2015-Q3.” [Department of Health and Human Services, “Continuing Progress on the Opioid Epidemic: the Role of the Affordable Care Act,” [1/11/17](#)]

OPIOID ABUSERS TEND TO HAVE MULTIPLE HEALTH PROBLEMS, SO ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM THROUGH MEDICAID IS A SENSIBLE APPROACH

Opioid Abusers Typically Had Other Health Problems, Like HIV, Hepatitis C, Chronic Pain Or Mental Health Problems That Required Additional Treatment And Services. According to McClatchy, “But health experts say their 10-year funding request won’t come close to providing the services needed by untold thousands of opioid abusers who are expected to lose their private health insurance and Medicaid coverage under the GOP legislation. That’s because opioid abusers typically have other health problems, like HIV, Hepatitis C, chronic pain or mental health problems that require additional treatment and services.” [McClatchy, [6/20/17](#)]

- **American Society Of Addiction Medicine Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair Dr. Corey Waller: “Funding Only Patients’ Substance Abuse Treatment Without Addressing Their Other Needs Would Likely Prove Ineffective.”** According to McClatchy, “Funding only patients’ substance abuse treatment without addressing their other needs would likely prove ineffective, said Dr. Corey Waller, who chairs the legislative advocacy committee of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. ‘You can’t treat any medical condition in isolation,’ Waller said. ‘It just seems illogical at every level.’” [McClatchy, [6/20/17](#)]
- **Waller: Treating Medical Conditions In Isolation “Just Seems Illogical At Every Level.”** According to McClatchy, “Funding only patients’ substance abuse treatment without addressing their other needs would likely prove ineffective, said Dr. Corey Waller, who chairs the legislative advocacy committee of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. ‘You can’t treat any medical condition in isolation,’ Waller said. ‘It just seems illogical at every level.’” [McClatchy, [6/20/17](#)]

The Bill Would Also Waive Essential Health Benefits Requirements, Putting Affordable Substance Abuse Treatment At Risk

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT WAS CONSIDERED AT PARTICULAR RISK FOR CUTS UNDER THE SENATE BILL

The BCRA Would Allow States To Waive Some Of The 10 Essential Health Benefits (EHBs) Put Into Place By The ACA. According to Business Insider, “The BCRA, like the AHCA’s MacArthur Amendment, would allow states to apply for permission to rescind some of the Affordable Care Act’s regulations as long as states show how it provides ‘for alternative means of, and requirements for, increasing access to comprehensive coverage, reducing average premiums, and increasing enrollment.’ Unlike the AHCA, the Senate bill would not allow states to rescind regulations related to preexisting conditions, but it would allow states to waive some of the 10 essential health benefits that Obamacare mandated all health plans cover.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

According To Health Economist Christine Eibner, Substance Abuse Treatment Was The EHB “Most At Risk” To Be Cut By States. According to Business Insider, “Christine Eibner, a health economist for the Rand Corporation, told Business Insider in May that while there was uncertainty about how states would change regulations, it was reasonable to think state legislators would be under a lot of pressure to cut back on EHBs if other states are able to show that doing so brings down premiums. If that happens, substance-abuse treatment is viewed as the benefit ‘most at risk’ to be cut, Eibner said.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

- **According To Eibner, State Legislators Would Be Pressured To Cut Back On EHBs If Other States Were Able To Lower Premiums By Making Cuts.** According to Business Insider, “Christine Eibner, a health economist for the Rand Corporation, told Business Insider in May that while there was uncertainty about how states would change regulations, it was reasonable to think state legislators would be under a lot of pressure to cut back on EHBs if other states are able to show that doing so brings down premiums. If that happens, substance-abuse treatment is viewed as the benefit ‘most at risk’ to be cut, Eibner said.” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

The Bill Only Provides \$2 Billion To Fight The Opioid Crisis – A Startlingly Low Number That Should Be A Deal-Breaker For Many In The Senate GOP

SOME REPUBLICANS CALLED FOR \$45 BILLION IN FUNDING TO ADDRESS THE OPIOID CRISIS, BUT THE BILL CONTAINED JUST \$2 BILLION

Some Republicans Sought A \$45 Billion Fund To Treat Opioid Addiction. According to The Washington Post, ‘Portman and Capito have also been pushing for the inclusion of a \$45 billion fund to treat and prevent opioid addiction. As of early Wednesday afternoon, the opioid money was not included in McConnell’s proposal, according to a top GOP senator and Senate aide familiar with the discussions.’ [Washington Post, [6/22/17](#)]

The Bill Contained Just \$2 Billion To Fight The Opioid Crisis In FY 2018. According to The Tennessean, ‘The U.S. Senate’s health care bill contains just \$2 billion to help fight the opioid crisis gripping the nation, far less than some Republican senators had initially hoped. The bill lists an appropriation of \$2 billion for fiscal year 2018 to provide grants to states to support and treatment and recovery services for people with mental or substance abuse disorders. This amount would fall far short of the reported \$45 billion in support some Republican senators had sought over 10 years. The 142-page bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act contained a single mention of the opioid crisis.’ [Tennessean, [6/22/17](#)]

ADVOCATES SAY THEY NEED FAR, FAR MORE – \$190 BILLION OVER TEN YEARS – TO PROPERLY ADDRESS THE CRISIS

The Senate’s New Health Care Bill Provided Just \$2 Billion Of The \$190 Billion Advocates Say Is Needed To Address The Opioid Crisis. According to Vox, “As an unprecedented number of Americans die from opioid overdoses, the Senate’s new health care bill is trying to put a Band-Aid over a gaping wound. The Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017, the Senate’s plan to repeal and replace Obamacare, would appropriate \$2 billion in 2018 to fund state grants to boost treatment and recovery services for those struggling with drug addiction and mental health disorders. There’s no mention of more money going to fund drug treatment beyond 2018. The \$2 billion number proposed is a fraction of what two key Republican senators from states hardest hit by the opioid crisis were asking for in the bill’s final version. Ohio Sen. Rob Portman and West Virginia Sen. Shelley Moore Capito had requested \$45 billion over the next 10 year. And it’s way less than the number that opioid advocates say will truly help in addressing the addiction crisis: \$190 billion over the next 10 years.” [Vox, [6/22/17](#)]

CAP: “The Opioid Fund Included In That Bill Would Not Come Close To Mitigating Harm From Other Parts Of Bill. Even If The Entirety Of The Fund Were Available To Cover Low-Income Individuals Being Treated For [Opioid Use Disorder], \$45 Billion Would Provide Only Half Of The \$91 Billion That Would Be Available Under The ACA For Health Coverage Alone.” According to the

Center for American Progress, “More importantly, the Senate ACA repeal bill is not a substitute for the comprehensive health benefits currently available through Medicaid and the ACA marketplaces. The opioid fund included in that bill would not come close to mitigating harm from other parts of bill. Even if the entirety of the fund were available to cover low-income individuals being treated for [opioid use disorder], \$45 billion would provide only half of the \$91 billion that would be available under the ACA for health coverage alone.” [Center for American Progress, [6/20/17](#)]

Harvard University Health Economics Professor Dr. Richard Frank: Roughly \$190 Billion Over 10 Years Was “Closer To What’s Actually Needed.” According to McClatchy, “Considering the need for extra services and the fast growth of the opioid problem, Dr. Richard Frank, a Harvard University health economics professor, said roughly \$190 billion over 10 years is closer to what’s actually needed.” [McClatchy, [6/20/17](#)]

THE BILL ONLY MENTIONED THE OPIOID CRISIS ONCE, IN A CLAUSE DISCUSSING THE PALTRY \$2 BILLION ALLOWANCE

The Better Care Reconciliation Act Of 2017 Only Contained One Mention Of The Opioid Crisis, In Which It Allocated \$2 Billion “To Provide Grants To States To Support Substance Use Disorder Treatment.” According to Business Insider, “Senate Republican leadership on Thursday released a draft of its long-awaited healthcare bill, the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017. The bill contained only one mention of the ongoing opioid crisis: It appropriates \$2 billion for fiscal year 2018 for the secretary of Health and Human Services ‘to provide grants to states to support substance use disorder treatment and recovery support services for individuals with mental or substance use disorders.’” [Business Insider, [6/25/17](#)]

PRESIDENT TRUMP HAD REPEATEDLY PROMISED TO DO MORE TO HELP AMERICANS ADDICTED TO OPIOIDS

Trump: “I Would Dramatically Expand Access To Treatment Slots And End Medicaid Policies That Obstruct Inpatient Treatment.” [Donald Trump, Rally, Portsmouth, NH, 10/15/16]

Trump On The Opioid Epidemic: “We’re Going To Clean It Up And Help The People Badly Addicted.” [“Morning Joe,” MSNBC, 2/8/16]

Trump On The Opioid Epidemic: “We Must Do More To Help These Addicts, We’re Not Doing Enough.” [Donald Trump, Rally, Windham, NH, 1/11/16]

Trump: “We Will Fight To Increase Access To Life-Saving Treatment To Battle The Addiction To Drugs, Which Is Afflicting Our Nation Like Never Ever Before.” Trump: “As part of our commitment to safe communities, we will also work to address the mental health crisis. Prisons should not be a substitute for treatment. We will fight to increase access to life-saving treatment to battle the addiction to drugs, which is afflicting our nation like never ever before -- ever.” [Donald Trump, MCCA Conference, Washington, DC, 2/8/17]

Trump Promised “Our Terrible Drug Epidemic Will Slow Down And Ultimately Stop.” [Donald Trump, Speech to a Joint Session of Congress, Washington, DC, 2/28/17]

Trump Promised Rural Towns And States That He Would Solve The Epidemic Ravaging Their Communities: “We Will Give People Struggling With Addiction Access To The Help They Need.” According to Politico, “As a candidate, Donald Trump promised rural towns and states hit hard by opioid addiction that he’d solve the epidemic ravaging their communities. ‘We will give people struggling with addiction access to the help they need,’ Trump vowed in October.” [Politico, [3/29/17](#)]

Experts Fear That Opioids Could Kill More Than Half A Million Americans Over The Next 10 Years

OPIOIDS KILLED NEARLY 100 AMERICANS PER DAY AS OF JUNE 2017, AND COULD KILL MORE THAN 650,000 OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

According To Data Compiled By STAT News, Opioids Could Kill Almost Half A Million People Across The Country Over The Next Ten Years. According to STAT News, “Opioids could kill nearly half a million people across America over the next decade as the crisis of addiction and overdose accelerates.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

As Of 2017, Drug Overdoses Were The Leading Cause Of Death For Americans Under The Age Of 50. According to STAT News, “Deaths from opioids have been rising sharply for years, and drug overdoses already kill more Americans under age 50 than anything else.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

As Of June 2017, Opioids Killed Nearly 100 Americans Per Day. According to STAT News, “There are now nearly 100 deaths a day from opioids, a swath of destruction that runs from tony New England suburbs to the farm country of California, from the beach towns of Florida to the Appalachian foothills.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

Experts Predicted That As Many As 250 Americans Per Day Could Die Of Opioid Overdoses If The Rapid Spread Of Drugs And Long Wait Times For Treatment Continued. According to STAT News, “In the worst-case scenario put forth by STAT’s expert panel, that toll could spike to 250 deaths a day, if potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil continue to spread rapidly and the waits for treatment continue to stretch weeks in hard-hit states like West Virginia and New Hampshire.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

- **At That Rate, Over 650,000 People Could Die From Opioid Overdose Over The Next Decade.** According to STAT News, “In the worst-case scenario put forth by STAT’s expert panel, that toll could spike to 250 deaths a day, if potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil continue to spread rapidly and the waits for treatment continue to stretch weeks in hard-hit states like West Virginia and New Hampshire. If that prediction proves accurate, the death toll over the next decade could top 650,000.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IS POISED TO KILL AS MANY AMERICANS AS GUN VIOLENCE, BREAST AND PROSTATE CANCERS, AND THE ENTIRE SPAN OF THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC

Opioids Could Kill As Many Americans In 10 Years As HIV/AIDS Killed In 35 Years. According to STAT News, “In the worst-case scenario put forth by STAT’s expert panel, that toll could spike to 250 deaths a day, if potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil continue to spread rapidly and the waits for treatment continue to stretch weeks in hard-hit states like West Virginia and New Hampshire. If that prediction proves accurate, the death toll over the next decade could top 650,000. That’s almost as many Americans as will die from breast cancer and prostate cancer during that time period. Put another way, opioids could kill nearly as many Americans in a decade as HIV/AIDS has killed since that epidemic began in the early 1980s.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

650,000 Deaths Per Year Would Approach The Number Killed By Breast And Prostate Cancers.

According to STAT News, “In the worst-case scenario put forth by STAT’s expert panel, that toll could spike to 250 deaths a day, if potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil continue to spread rapidly and the waits for treatment continue to stretch weeks in hard-hit states like West Virginia and New Hampshire. If that prediction proves accurate, the death toll over the next decade could top 650,000. That’s almost as many Americans as will die from breast cancer and prostate cancer during that time period. Put another way, opioids could kill nearly as many Americans in a decade as HIV/AIDS has killed since that epidemic began in the early 1980s.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

Conservative Estimates Projected That By 2027, The Annual Death Toll From Opioids Would Surpass The Worst Year Of Gun Deaths On Record.

According to STAT News, “Even the more middle-of-the-road forecasts suggest that by 2027, the annual U.S. death toll from opioids alone will likely surpass the worst year of gun deaths on record, and may top the worst year of AIDS deaths at the peak of that epidemic in the 1990s, when nearly 50,000 people were dying each year.” [STAT News, [6/27/17](#)]

Shelley Moore Capito’s West Virginia Suffers From Some Of The Highest Opioid Death Tolls In The Country

WEST VIRGINIA COUNTIES HAVE SOME OF THE HIGHEST DEATH TOLLS FROM OPIOID ADDICTION IN THE COUNTRY

Six West Virginia Counties Topped The List Of Highest Death Tolls Resulting From Opioid Addiction In The Country. According to Quartz, “Reporters at the Charleston Gazette-Mail in West Virginia analyzed shipment data from the US Food and Drug Administration and found three major drug manufacturing companies—McKesson, Cardinal Health, and AmerisourceBergen—made \$17 billion by sending 423 million opioid painkillers to West Virginia between 2007 and 2012. Six of the 55 counties in West Virginia have the highest death tolls resulting from opioid addiction in the country.” [Quartz, [12/19/16](#)]

Wyoming County, West Virginia Had The Nation’s Highest Opioid Overdose Death Rate By County. According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, “Rural and poor, Mingo County has the fourth-highest prescription opioid death rate of any county in the United States. The trail also weaves through Wyoming County, where shipments of OxyContin have doubled, and the county's overdose death rate leads the nation.” [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]

HUNDREDS OF WEST VIRGINIANS DIE FROM OPIOID OVERDOSES PER YEAR, A RATE 2.5 TIMES HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

More Than 800 West Virginians Died Due To Opioid Overdoses During 2016, Which Amounted To An Increase Of More Than 17 Percent From The Previous Year. According to West Virginia Public Broadcasting, “West Virginia’s opioid overdose death rate is two and a half times the national average, the highest in the country. Last year, 864 West Virginians died from an overdose, up by more than 17 percent from the year prior.” [West Virginia Public Broadcasting, [5/9/17](#)]

The Death Rate For West Virginians Due To Drug Overdoses Was 2.5 Times Higher Than The National Average Between 2011 And 2013. According to The Fiscal Times, “West Virginia has the highest rate of deaths from drug overdoses of any state. Between 2011 and 2013, West Virginia suffered from a rate of 33.5 drug overdoses per 100,000 people, compared to a national average of 13.4 deaths, according to a

report by the non-partisan Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation." [Fiscal Times, [12/19/16](#)]

The Fire Department In Huntington, West Virginia Once Responded To 26 Opioid Overdose Cases In A Single Day. According to The Christian Science Monitor, "Rader and the rest of the Huntington team – the first of its kind in the state – are not waiting for the state or federal government to take action against opioid addiction. They can't afford to: The Huntington Fire Department responds to at least five overdose calls per day. On one memorable August day, there were 26 – in just a few hours." [Christian Science Monitor, [5/22/17](#)]

During 2016, One Person In West Virginia Died From Drugs Every 10 Hours On Average. According to The Christian Science Monitor, "In West Virginia, one person died from drugs every 10 hours on average in 2016. That's due to a number of factors, say experts: chronic pain from manual labor, the lowest education rate in the country, and an influx of pills from drug wholesalers." [Christian Science Monitor, [5/22/17](#)]

OPIOID PILLS ARE BEING SHIPPED TO WEST VIRGINIA AT AN ALARMING RATE

Out-Of-State Drug Companies Shipped Nearly 9 Million Hydrocodone Pills Over Two Years To Kermit, A Small West Virginia Town With A Population Of 392. According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, "The trail of painkillers leads to West Virginia's southern coalfields, to places like Kermit, population 392. There, out-of-state drug companies shipped nearly 9 million highly addictive — and potentially lethal — hydrocodone pills over two years to a single pharmacy in the Mingo County town." [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]

Over A Six Year Period, Hydrocodone And Oxycodone Shipments To West Virginia Amounted To 433 Pills For Every Person In West Virginia. According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, "In six years, drug wholesalers showered the state with 780 million hydrocodone and oxycodone pills, while 1,728 West Virginians fatally overdosed on those two painkillers, a Sunday Gazette-Mail investigation found. The unfettered shipments amount to 433 pain pills for every man, woman and child in West Virginia." [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]

MEDICAID EXPANSION GAVE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE TO OVER 200,000 WEST VIRGINIANS SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

204,819 West Virginians With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University's Wagner School of Public Service, there are 204,819 individuals "with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion" in West Virginia. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

- **Medicaid Paid For 45 Percent Of Addiction Treatment Costs In West Virginia.** According to STAT News, "The massive influx of money would have at least partially helped make up for the Senate's proposed rollback of Medicaid, which pays for roughly half of addiction treatment in many states. In West Virginia, it funds nearly 45 percent of addiction treatment costs. In Ohio, the figure is 49.5 percent." [STAT News, [6/22/17](#)]

WEST VIRGINIANS OF ALL AGES – EVEN BABIES – ARE STRUGGLING AND DYING FROM OPIOID ADDICTION

More Than 3 Percent Of Babies Born In West Virginia During 2013 Experienced Opioid Withdrawal Symptoms. According to STAT News, “The number of babies being born in the United States addicted to opioids has tripled in a 15-year stretch, according to a government report published Thursday. [...] While the report showed huge jumps in nearly every state, the hardest hit were Maine, Vermont, and West Virginia. In West Virginia, 33.4 of every 1,000 babies born went through withdrawal symptoms in 2013.” [STAT News, [8/11/16](#)]

West Virginia Resident Mary Kathryn Mullins Died After Becoming Addicted To Pain Pills Following An OxyContin Prescription She Received For Injuries Related To A Car Crash. According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, “Mary Kathryn Mullins' addiction, her mother said, started after a car crash near her home in Boone County. Her back was hurting. A doctor prescribed OxyContin. ‘She got messed up,’ Kay Mullins said. ‘They wrote her the pain pills, and she just got hooked.’ Kay Mullins has a hard time talking about the 10 years that followed, all the lies her daughter told to cover her addiction, stealing from her brother, the time she shot herself in the stomach in an attempt to end her life. [...] Two days later, she stopped breathing in her bed. Her brother, Nick Mullins, a Madison police officer, responded to the 911 call. He tried chest compressions, but he could not revive his sister. At age 50, Mary Kathryn Mullins was dead.” [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]

- **Mullins Would Consume As Many As 120 Pills Per Week, Purchasing Pills With Cash Since She Didn’t Have Insurance.** According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, “Mary Kathryn Mullins' path of dependence took her to pain clinics that churned out illegal prescriptions by the hundreds, pharmacies that dispensed doses by the millions and, on many occasions, to a Raleigh County doctor who lectured her about the benefits of vitamins but handed her prescriptions for OxyContin. ‘She'd get 90 or 120 pills and finish them off in a week,’ recalled Kay Mullins, Mary Kathryn's mother. ‘Every month, she'd go to Beckley, they'd take \$200 cash, no insurance, and the pills, they'd be gone within a week.’” [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]
- **Mullins Would Receive Illegal Prescriptions From A Doctor, Who Would Give Her The Pills At His Residence In A Wooded Area.** According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, “Mary Kathryn Mullins would go to dozens of doctors for prescriptions. She was a ‘doctor shopper.’ Her mother can't recall most of the doctors by name. She said she believes the doctor who talked to her daughter about vitamins was recently in the news after being charged with prescription fraud. Many rogue pain clinics have been shut down in recent years. ‘She'd go to his house in the woods for prescriptions,’ Kay Mullins said.” [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]
- **Before Her Death, Mullins Attempted To Take Her Life By Shooting Herself In The Stomach.** According to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, “Mary Kathryn Mullins' addiction, her mother said, started after a car crash near her home in Boone County. Her back was hurting. A doctor prescribed OxyContin. ‘She got messed up,’ Kay Mullins said. ‘They wrote her the pain pills, and she just got hooked.’ Kay Mullins has a hard time talking about the 10 years that followed, all the lies her daughter told to cover her addiction, stealing from her brother, the time she shot herself in the stomach in an attempt to end her life.” [Charleston Gazette-Mail, [12/17/16](#)]

17-Year-Old Zaine Pulliam Became An “Opiate Orphan” After Finding Both Of His Parents Dead On Their Bedroom Floor From An Opioid Overdose. According to The Washington Post, “The midmorning sun came in through the curtains and Zaine Pulliam awoke to the debris of a weekend party. [...] Nearly everyone in Zaine’s life had been anxiously monitoring that line for the past year and a half, ever since both of his parents died of heroin overdoses in April 2015. His parents had become two of the record 33,091

people to die of opioid overdoses that year in a national crisis that has been worst of all in rural West Virginia, where health officials estimate that overdose rates are now eight to 10 times higher than the national average. [...] These children are sometimes referred to by health officials here as opiate orphans, and three of the most recent ones live in a small house in South Charleston: Zoie, 10, who believed that her parents had died in their sleep; Arianna, 13, who was just starting to wear her mother's old makeup; and Zaine, 17, who had been the one to discover his parents that morning on their bedroom floor, and whose grades had begun to drop ever since." [Washington Post, [12/17/16](#)]

Breanne McUly Became The Leading Heroin Dealer In Petersburg, West Virginia At The Age Of 19. According to The Guardian, "he was the town's leading heroin dealer. She was 19 years old [...] Before long, McUly reckons she was the leading heroin supplier in Petersburg. She was 19 years old." [The Guardian, [6/19/17](#)]

- **McUly Would Receive Illicit Opioid Prescriptions From Dr. Rajan Masih, Who Was Also Addicted To The Pills.** According to The Guardian, "But McUly knew from those of her friends who preferred to get high on painkillers – effectively heroin in a legal pill – that Masih was the go-to doctor for illicit opioid prescriptions in Grant County, West Virginia. 'Everybody knew him as pretty much the top drug dealer around here,' said McUly 'Maybe he got greedy. Everybody makes mistakes just like I did. He's a decent person now, trying to make up for it.' But Masih was more than a dealer. The doctor was also hooked on the pills he was feeding to other opioid addicts." [The Guardian, [6/19/17](#)]
- **McUly Drove To Columbus, Ohio To Purchase Heroin From Mexican Dealers.** According to The Guardian, "By the time Masih went to prison in 2010, the authorities were finally responding to the epidemic and cracking down on pill mills. That drove up prices on the black market and cheap heroin filled the undiminished demand. McUly did not miss the opportunity. She hooked up with Mexican dealers in Columbus, Ohio, a five hour drive west. She turned a 3.5g 'eight ball' of heroin for \$600 into several thousand dollars worth of individual hits on the street in Petersburg." [The Guardian, [6/19/17](#)]

MARCH: CAPITO WROTE TO MITCH MCCONNELL EXPRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT UNDER MEDICAID EXPANSION

Sen. Shelley Moore Capito Wrote A Letter With Three Other Senators Emphasizing The Need For Families Benefiting From Medicaid Expansion Programs To Have Access To Treatment For Substance Use Disorder. According to a letter by Sens. Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, Cory Gardner, and Lisa Murkowski sent to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, "We are concerned that any poorly implemented or poorly timed change in the current funding structure in Medicaid could result in a reduction in access to life-saving health care services. The Medicaid population includes a wide range of beneficiaries, many of which cycle on and off Medicaid due to frequent changes in income, family situations, and living environments. The Department of Health and Human Services reports that nearly one-third of individuals covered under the Medicaid expansion have a mental health or substance use disorder." [Office of Senator Shelley Moore Capito, [3/6/17](#)]

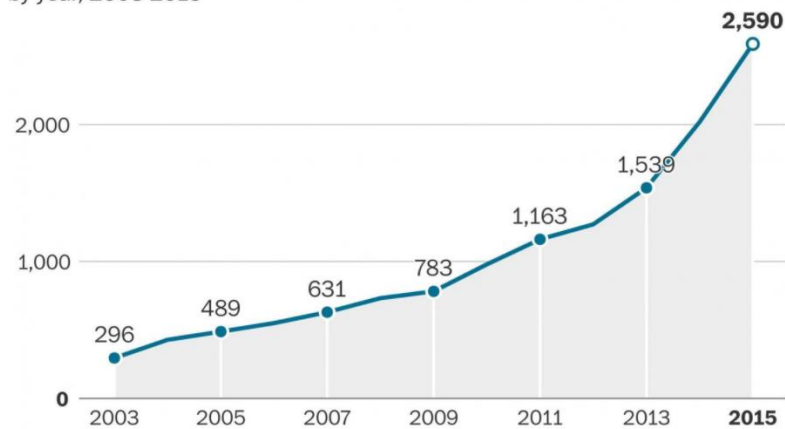
Rob Portman's Ohio Had More Opioid-Related Deaths In 2014 Than The Significantly Larger States Of California, Florida, And New York

OHIO IS A NATIONAL LEADER IN OPIOID-RELATED DEATHS

Ohio: More Than 2,500 People Died From Opioid Overdoses, More Than Four Out Of Five Drug Overdose Deaths. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 2,698 opioid overdose deaths in Ohio in 2015, making up 82% of the state's 3,310 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

Ohio drug overdose deaths

by year, 2003-2015



Source: Ohio Department of Health

WASHINGTON POST

[Washington Post, [3/16/17](#)]

Ohio Led The Nation In Opioid Overdose Deaths In 2014, With More Than States Like California, Florida And New York, Whose Populations Were Significantly Larger. According to The News-Herald, “In 1999, Ohio ranked 15th in total opioid overdose deaths. There were 164 that year, 53 from heroin. Fifteen years later, things looked much different in the Buckeye State. In 2014, 7.4 percent of all opioid overdose deaths happened in Ohio, making it the deadliest state in the nation in this category. It was the first time Ohio topped the list, surpassing states like California, Florida and New York, whose populations are significantly larger.” [News-Herald, [12/1/16](#)]

- **Ohio Led The Nation In Heroin And Synthetic Opioid Deaths, Ranking Third In Natural And Semisynthetic Opioid Deaths.** According to The News-Herald, “In addition to the most total opioid overdose deaths in 2014, Ohio led the nation in heroin and synthetic opioid deaths. Ohio was third in natural and semisynthetic opioid deaths.” [News-Herald, [12/1/16](#)]

Overdose Deaths Caused Capacity Issues For The Montgomery County Coroner, Which Had To Utilize Its Contingency Plan Of Calling For The Help Of Local Funeral Homes Or Storing Bodies In Refrigerated Trucks Outside The Facility. According to The Associated Press, “An increasing number of overdose deaths in Ohio has led the Dayton-area coroner to seek a funeral home’s help to store bodies. Montgomery County Coroner Kent Harshbarger tells the Dayton Daily News it happened once late last year. If the office reaches capacity, its contingency plans call for enlisting the help of local funeral homes or storing bodies in refrigerated trucks that could be parked outside the facility in Dayton.” [News-Herald, [12/1/16](#)]

- **Drug Overdoses Were The Suspected Cause Of Death For About Two-Thirds Of The Ten People Whose Bodies The Montgomery County Coroner Retrieved From Thirty Ohio Counties On A Daily Basis.** According to The Associated Press, “An increasing number of overdose deaths in Ohio has led the Dayton-area coroner to seek a funeral home’s help to store

bodies. Montgomery County Coroner Kent Harshbarger tells the Dayton Daily News it happened once late last year. [...]cThe county takes bodies from 30 of the 88 counties in Ohio, one of the U.S. states hardest hit by rising death tolls from heroin and other drugs. Harshbarger says his office handles about 10 bodies a day, and up to 65 percent of those are suspected overdose deaths.” [News-Herald, [12/1/16](#)]

MEDICAID EXPANSION PROVIDED HEALTH CARE TO 700,000 OHIOANS, INCLUDING OVER 150,000 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

700,000 Ohioans Gained Health Care Coverage Through Medicaid Expansion. According to USA Today, “Portman said he is acutely aware of the possible consequences of rolling back Medicaid, a joint federal-state insurance program for the poor, elderly and disabled. Under Obamacare, Ohio and 31 other states (plus the District of Columbia) expanded Medicaid, with Washington paying more than 90% of the cost for the new enrollees. In Ohio, that move has helped about 700,000 people gain health coverage, with many accessing desperately needed services for addiction treatment as the state grapples with the opioid epidemic.” [USA Today, [6/9/17](#)]

USA Today: Medicaid Expansion In Ohio Has Helped Many Access “Desperately Needed Services For Addiction Treatment As The State Grapples With The Opioid Epidemic.” According to USA Today, “Portman said he is acutely aware of the possible consequences of rolling back Medicaid, a joint federal-state insurance program for the poor, elderly and disabled. Under Obamacare, Ohio and 31 other states (plus the District of Columbia) expanded Medicaid, with Washington paying more than 90% of the cost for the new enrollees. In Ohio, that move has helped about 700,000 people gain health coverage, with many accessing desperately needed services for addiction treatment as the state grapples with the opioid epidemic.” [USA Today, [6/9/17](#)]

151,257 Ohioans With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University’s Wagner School of Public Service, there are 151,257 individuals “with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion” in Ohio. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

- **Medicaid Paid For 49.5 Percent Of Addiction Treatment Costs In Ohio.** According to STAT News, “The massive influx of money would have at least partially helped make up for the Senate’s proposed rollback of Medicaid, which pays for roughly half of addiction treatment in many states. In West Virginia, it funds nearly 45 percent of addiction treatment costs. In Ohio, the figure is 49.5 percent.” [STAT News, [6/22/17](#)]
- **Ohio’s Republican Governor, John Kasich, Expressed “Deep Concerns” With The Senate’s Plan Lack Of Resources For “Those Who Are Dealing With Drug Addiction.”** According to The Associated Press, “I have deep concerns with details in the U.S. Senate’s plan to fix America’s health care system and the resources needed to help our most vulnerable, including those who are dealing with drug addiction, mental illness and chronic health problems and have nowhere else to turn,” Ohio Gov. John Kasich, a Republican, said in a Twitter message. Kasich was part of a group of Republican and Democratic governors who wrote a letter last week to Senate leaders calling for them to work in a bipartisan way to revamp the nation’s complex health insurance policies.” [Associated Press, [6/23/17](#)]

- **Ohio Mental Health And Addiction Services Director Tracy Plouck: Medicaid Expansion Allowed Ohio To Redirect Its Own Resources To Priorities Like Providing Recovery Housing After Detox And Reversal Posed “A Risk That's Nearly Insurmountable” In Taking Away Those Resources.** According to The Associated Press, “Tracy Plouck, Ohio's director of mental health and addiction services, said Medicaid expansion dollars from Washington have allowed her state to redirect its own resources to priorities like providing recovery housing after detox. Reversing that would have real consequences for people who are trying to straighten their out their lives, she said. ‘If you go back into an environment where people are using, that sets you up with a risk that's nearly insurmountable.’” [Associated Press, [6/20/17](#)]

OPIOID ADDICTION HAS DEVASTATED FAMILIES ACROSS OHIO

A Police Officer In East Liverpool, Ohio Found 47-Year-Old James Lee Acord And 50-Year-Old Rhonda Pasek Barely Conscious And Overdosed On Opioids While Driving Their 4-Year Old Grandson. According to The Washington Post, “On Wednesday afternoon, a police officer in East Liverpool, Ohio, stopped a vehicle for driving erratically and made a shocking discovery: The driver was barely conscious. A woman was slumped across the passenger seat next to him, turning blue. In the back of the vehicle, a 4-year-old boy sat restrained in a car seat, according to a police report. The report identified the woman as the boy's mother. However, a family friend said she is his paternal grandmother. The officer called an ambulance, and when the EMTs arrived, they administered the lifesaving drug Narcan, used to reverse opioid overdoses. After 47-year-old James Lee Acord and 50-year-old Rhonda L. Pasek were revived, police arrested them and contacted Columbiana County Children’s Services. Acord pleaded no contest and was sentenced to 180 days in jail on charges of driving under the influence and endangering children, according to a local news report. Pasek pleaded not guilty to charges of disorderly conduct, endangering children and a seat-belt violation.” [Washington Post, [9/9/16](#)]

29-Year Old Brenden Clark Had To Have A Heartbreaking Conversation With His 8-Year Old Son, Informing Him That His Mom Had Died Of A Heroin Overdose. According to The Washington Post, “Brenden Clark sat across from his 8-year-old son at a picnic table in northeastern Ohio, preparing to deliver devastating news. ‘I’ve got something to tell you, okay?’ he said, reaching across the table to take his son’s hand. The 29-year-old father bowed his head and took a deep breath, then flicked the ashes from a cigarette resting between his fingers. The young boy, still wearing his backpack after a long day at school, looked anxiously at his grandmother, who was sitting beside him. ‘Mommy died last night,’ Clark told his son. ‘Okay?’ His son, Cameron, stared into his father’s face. ‘What?’ he said. ‘Mommy died last night. Okay?’ Clark repeated, his voice beginning to break. ‘What do you mean? My mom?’ he questioned. ‘Yes,’ Clark said quietly. ‘How!’ the boy cried out. ‘From drugs,’ Clark said. The boy fell into his grandmother’s arms and let out an agonizing wail. ‘God!’ Clark said, reaching across the table to grab his son. Seconds later, the father walked across the picnic table and wrapped his arms around his child. ‘I’m so sorry,’ he told him.” [Washington Post, [10/15/16](#)]

In Centerville, Ohio, 36-Year Old Pilot Brian Halye And His 34-Year-Old Wife, Courtney, Were Found Dead By Their Children From An Apparent Heroin Or Fentanyl Overdose. According to Fox 59, “CENTERVILLE, Ohio — A Spirit Airlines pilot and his wife were found dead in their southwestern Ohio home Thursday. Authorities are still investigating but have said the deaths appear to be drug-related. Brian J. Halye, 36, a pilot with Spirit Airlines and his wife, 34-year-old Courtney A. Halye, were found dead in a bedroom of their home by their children, officials said. In one of two 911 calls placed just before 8 a.m., the oldest of their children is talking to a dispatcher while his sisters can be heard crying in the background. Police are investigating the deaths. Several things indicate drug use may have been a factor. Centerville Police Department spokesman John Davis cited drug paraphernalia that was found at the scene as one tip-off that it appears the deaths are drug-related. Ken Betz, director of the Montgomery County Coroner’s office, said the preliminary results of the couple’s autopsies indicate that an accidental drug overdose may have led to their

deaths. The Dayton Daily News reports that the coroner's preliminary findings suggest that the couple might have overdosed on heroin or fentanyl." [Fox 59, [3/19/17](#)]

SEN. PORTMAN SAID HE WOULDN'T VOTE FOR A HEALTH CARE REPLACEMENT THAT DIDN'T ADDRESS THE OPIOID CRISIS

Sen. Portman: "Any Replacement Is Going To Have To Do Something To Address This Opioid Crisis That Is Gripping Our Country." According to The New York Times, "Without some opioid funding, Mr. Portman cannot vote for the bill, he said, adding, 'Any replacement is going to have to do something to address this opioid crisis that is gripping our country.'" [New York Times, [6/20/17](#)]

MARCH: PORTMAN WROTE TO MITCH MCCONNELL EXPRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT UNDER MEDICAID EXPANSION

Sen. Portman Wrote A Letter With Three Other Senators Emphasizing The Need For Families Benefiting From Medicaid Expansion Programs To Have Access To Treatment For Substance Use Disorder. According to a letter by Sens. Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, Cory Gardner, and Lisa Murkowski sent to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, "We are concerned that any poorly implemented or poorly timed change in the current funding structure in Medicaid could result in a reduction in access to life-saving health care services. The Medicaid population includes a wide range of beneficiaries, many of which cycle on and off Medicaid due to frequent changes in income, family situations, and living environments. The Department of Health and Human Services reports that nearly one-third of individuals covered under the Medicaid expansion have a mental health or substance use disorder." [Office of Senator Shelley Moore Capito, [3/6/17](#)]

2015: Over 1,300 People Died Opioid-Related Deaths In Pat Toomey's Pennsylvania

OPIOID OVERDOSES KILLED OVER 1,300 PENNSYLVANIANS IN 2015

Pennsylvania: More Than 1,300 People Died From Opioid Overdoses, More Than A Third Of All Deaths From Drug Overdoses. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 1,362 opioid overdose deaths in Pennsylvania in 2015, making up 42% of the state's 3,264 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

Philadelphia's Overdose Fatalities Were Three Times The City's Murder Rate. According to The Philadelphia Inquirer, "These smuggled drugs are fueling the rapidly growing epidemic, and there are few communities that haven't felt the impact. In 2015, more than 3,500 people died in Pennsylvania from overdoses, up 30 percent from 2014. Last year, Philadelphia suffered 900 fatal overdoses – three times the city's murder rate. It endangers our police and first responder community as well. While making drug busts, officers across the country have been hospitalized, and the Drug Enforcement Administration has even issued a special warning on fentanyl's toxicity to law enforcement." [Philadelphia Inquirer, [5/9/17](#)]

MEDICAID EXPANSION PROVIDED HEALTH CARE TO 700,000 PENNSYLVANIANS, INCLUDING OVER 80,000 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

700,000 Pennsylvanians Gained Health Care Coverage Through Medicaid Expansion. According to Penn Live, “One of the key components of the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, is expanding Medicaid to cover many more people. Some states turned down the expansion. But Pennsylvania is among the states that accepted, receiving hundreds of millions in federal funds to pay for the expansion. As a result, about 700,000 Pennsylvania residents have gained medical coverage, including drug addiction treatment. About 63,000 of them were treated for substance abuse in 2015, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.” [Penn Live, [1/12/17](#)]

80,910 Pennsylvanians With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University’s Wagner School of Public Service, there are 80,910 individuals “with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion” in Pennsylvania. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

OPIOIDS HAVE DESTROYED LIVES ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA

A Wilkes-Barre Man Overdosed On Opioids While Driving His Car With His Child In The Back Seat. According to the Times Leader, “A man reportedly overdosed in his car with a child in the backseat at the busy intersection of North Wilkes-Barre Boulevard and Conyngham Avenue Wednesday morning. Wilkes-Barre police took the child who had been strapped into a car seat. The unidentified driver was taken by ambulance to a local hospital. First responders administered naloxone, an opioid antidote to the driver. A police officer held the naloxone spray injector and syringe in his right hand and a spoon in his left hand. The items were taken from the car during the response that snarled traffic at the intersection.” [Times Leader, [4/19/17](#)]

An 11-Year Old Pittsburgh Girl Overdosed On Heroin. According to CBS Pittsburgh, “A child overdosed on heroin in Beechview on Wednesday, KDKA has confirmed. It happened in the 2300 block of Palm Beach Avenue around 6 p.m. Officers were called for the suspected overdose of an 11-year-old female. Paramedics arrived and administered Narcan. The girl was transported to UPMC Children’s Hospital and is in critical condition. ‘Her sister found her,’ the girl’s grandmother said. ‘It was after dinner, she didn’t come down to eat.’ Sources tell KDKA investigators found multiple stamp bags of heroin with the child, and one of the bags was open. ‘The ambulance was here, police, I don’t know what went on in my neighbor’s house but the police were there for a very long time, first time ever an incident over there,’ neighbor Denise Shealey said. ‘They were taking the little girl out of the house and she was screaming.’ No further information has been released.” [CBS Pittsburgh, [4/11/17](#)]

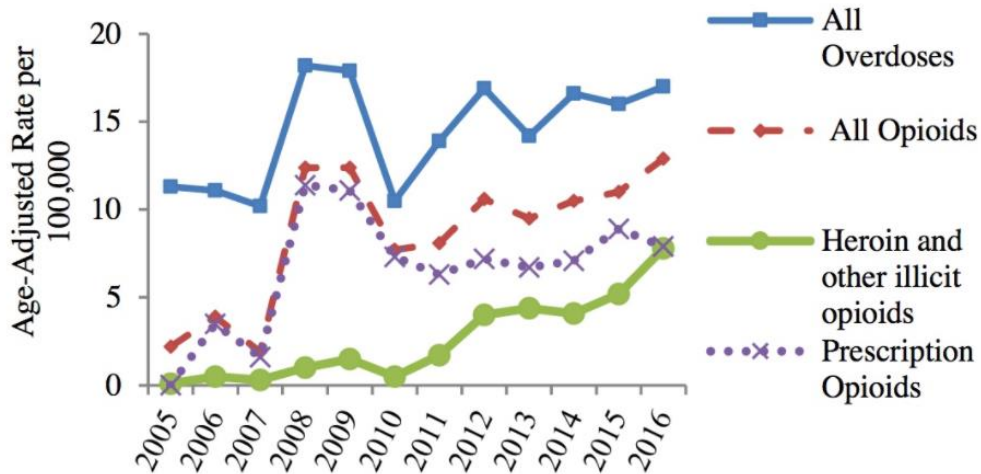
Two Halfway House Counselors In A Chester County Died Of Opioid Overdoses. According to Philly.com, “Two counselors at a halfway house for recovering addicts in Chester County died Sunday of drug overdoses, the county District Attorney’s Office said Wednesday. Residents found their counselors unresponsive in two bedrooms at Freedom Ridge Recovery Lodge in West Brandywine Township around 2 p.m. They tried to revive one with a nasal spray of naloxone. When the counselor did not respond, the residents called 911. The counselors, who lived and worked at the home, were pronounced dead at the scene. Their names were not released. [...] ‘If anybody is wondering how bad the opioid epidemic has become, this case is a frightening example,’ Chester County District Attorney Thomas Hogan said in a statement. ‘The staff members in charge of supervising recovering addicts succumbed to their own addiction and died of opioid overdoses.’” [Philly.com, [5/24/17](#)]

In Lisa Murkowski’s Alaska, Opioid Addiction Is On The Rise

ALASKA HAS EXPERIENCED A RECENT SURGE IN HEROIN OVERDOSES

2015: 86 People Died From Opioid Overdoses In Alaska, More Than A Two-Thirds Of All Deaths From Drug Overdoses. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 86 opioid overdose deaths in Alaska in 2015, making up 70% of the state's 122 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

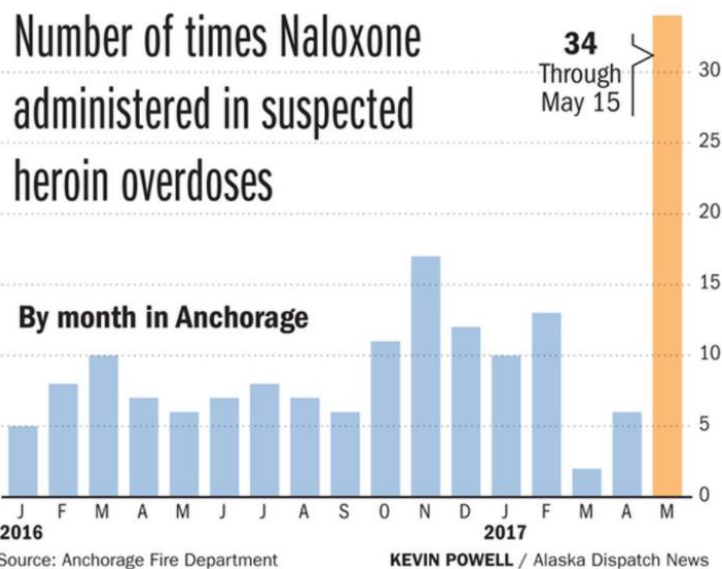
Figure. Overdose Deaths by Drug Category — Alaska, 2005–2016



[KTUU, [4/20/17](#)]

In The First Two Weeks Of May, 2017, There Was A Surge In Heroin Overdoses In Alaska.

According to ADN.com, “Since the beginning of May, a disturbing surge of heroin overdoses has been playing out in parking lots and homes across Anchorage. Since May 1, emergency responders in Alaska's biggest city have used naloxone to revive people from suspected heroin overdoses 34 times, according to the Anchorage Fire Department. That's a rate of more than two overdoses per day.” [ADN.com, [5/17/17](#)]



[ADN.com, [5/17/17](#)]

As Of May 2017, The Anchorage Fire Department Was Using Naloxone To Revive Patients From Heroin Overdoses At A Rate Of More Than Two Times Per Day. According to Alaska Dispatch News, “Since the beginning of May, a disturbing surge of heroin overdoses has been playing out in parking lots and homes across Anchorage. Since May 1, emergency responders in Alaska's biggest city have used naloxone to revive people from suspected heroin overdoses 34 times, according to the Anchorage Fire Department. That's a rate of more than two overdoses per day.” [Alaska Dispatch News, [5/17/17](#)]

- **During April 2017, Naloxone Had Only Been Used A Total Of Six Times By The Anchorage Fire Department.** According to Alaska Dispatch News, “Since May 1, emergency responders in Alaska's biggest city have used naloxone to revive people from suspected heroin overdoses 34 times, according to the Anchorage Fire Department. That's a rate of more than two overdoses per day. In the month of April, medics used naloxone a total of six times.” [Alaska Dispatch News, [5/17/17](#)]

MEDICAID EXPANSION PROVIDED HEALTH COVERAGE TO NEARLY 15,000 ALASKANS, INCLUDING OVER 5,000 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

Medicaid Expansion Provided Health Coverage To Nearly 14,400 Alaskans On Top Of The Nearly 140,000 Already Receiving Care. According to The Kaiser Family Foundation, 137,800 Alaskans were enrolled in Medicaid and 14,400 Alaskans received Medicaid through Medicaid expansion as of March, 2016. [Kaiser Family Foundation, [2016](#)]

5,389 Alaskans With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University's Wagner School of Public Service, there are 5,389 individuals “with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion” in Alaska. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

- **Alaska Gov. Bill Walker Said He Was Concerned About The Senate Plan’s “One-Size-Fits-All” Approach Which Could Compromise Medicaid.** According to the Alaska Dispatch News, “Alaska Gov. Bill Walker echoed that sentiment, noting that Alaska pays the ‘highest health care premiums in the country,’ and many in the state face steep costs for health care. Walker, who chose to expand Medicaid coverage to include more Alaskans who live near the poverty line, said that affordable treatment is necessary to manage the state’s opioid epidemic. ‘My team and I are analyzing the newly released discussion draft of the Senate Republican health care bill. Given the population size, vastness, and remote location of Alaska, I am deeply concerned about the potential effects of a one-size-fits-all approach,’ Walker said.” [Alaska Dispatch News, [6/22/17](#)]
- **Alaska Gov. Bill Walker Said Medicaid Has Provided The Affordable Treatment Necessary To Address The State’s Opioid Epidemic.** According to the Alaska Dispatch News, “Alaska Gov. Bill Walker echoed that sentiment, noting that Alaska pays the ‘highest health care premiums in the country,’ and many in the state face steep costs for health care. Walker, who chose to expand Medicaid coverage to include more Alaskans who live near the poverty line, said that affordable treatment is necessary to manage the state’s opioid epidemic. ‘My team and I are analyzing the newly released discussion draft of the Senate Republican health care bill. Given the population size, vastness, and remote location of Alaska, I am deeply concerned about the potential effects of a one-size-fits-all approach,’ Walker said.” [Alaska Dispatch News, [6/22/17](#)]

OPIOIDS HAVE KILLED YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS ALASKA

24-Year Old Kellsie Green Of Wasilla Died Of Heroin Withdrawal In An Anchorage Jail. According to ADN.com, “Kellsie Green died in January, six days after she entered the Anchorage jail -- 24 years old, weighing only about 80 pounds and about to embark on the brutal process of detoxing from a 4-gram-a-day heroin habit. Now Green's father is claiming in a civil wrongful death lawsuit filed late last month against the Alaska Department of Corrections that the brief jail sentence he'd hoped would save her life instead led to her death. John Green said his daughter's cellmates at the Anchorage jail told him requests to help Kellsie went mostly ignored even as her condition worsened to the point she could no longer stand, vomited blood and soiled herself. ‘The lack of compassion for somebody that's going through this -- how can that be?’ the Wasilla resident said during a recent interview. ‘This isn't a jail in Turkey or somewhere. This is America.’ The Alaska Correctional Officers Association is disputing the story Kellsie Green's cellmates told about requests for help being ignored. A representative said correctional officers tried to get help from medical staff. Green's death has already changed the way DOC monitors inmates going through withdrawal.” [AND.com, [9/18/16](#)]

- **Kellsie Green’s Heroin Habit Brought Her Weight Down To Just 80 Pounds.** According to ADN.com, “Kellsie Green died in January, six days after she entered the Anchorage jail -- 24 years old, weighing only about 80 pounds and about to embark on the brutal process of detoxing from a 4-gram-a-day heroin habit. Now Green's father is claiming in a civil wrongful death lawsuit filed late last month against the Alaska Department of Corrections that the brief jail sentence he'd hoped would save her life instead led to her death. John Green said his daughter's cellmates at the Anchorage jail told him requests to help Kellsie went mostly ignored even as her condition worsened to the point she could no longer stand, vomited blood and soiled herself. ‘The lack of compassion for somebody that's going through this -- how can that be?’ the Wasilla resident said during a recent interview. ‘This isn't a jail in Turkey or somewhere. This is America.’ The Alaska Correctional Officers Association is disputing the story Kellsie Green's cellmates told about requests for help being ignored. A representative said correctional officers tried to get help from medical staff. Green's death has already changed the way DOC monitors inmates going through withdrawal.” [AND.com, [9/18/16](#)]

In The Span Of One Day, Four People In The Remote Alaskan Village Of Quinhagak Overdosed On Heroin. According to ADN.com, “On Aug. 15, one after the other, four people overdosed on heroin in Quinhagak, a remote Bering Sea village of fewer than 700 people. It's a place where the city council is grappling with loose dogs and where piped water has finally reached almost every home in town. Three men lived, including Church's older brother. The heroin this time came mixed with the powerful painkiller fentanyl. For Roberts, the combination was deadly.” [ADN.com, [9/18/16](#)]

- **19-Year Old Jamie Roberts Died Of A Heroin Overdose.** According to ADN.com, “That last time, that worst time, the high came on fast and strong. They were inhaling smoke from cooked heroin — once, twice, then each did a bit more, ‘three little tiny specks’ in all, said Shane Church, 20. Soon he and his girlfriend closed their eyes, relaxing, lying together close. She never woke up. Jamie Roberts was just 19 and, as her family tells it, a happy new graduate of Kuinerrarmiut Elitnaurviat, the just-remodeled school in the Southwest Alaska village of Quinhagak. Her whole name was on the bulletin for her memorial service: Jamie Brenda Nekevvaq Nalugalria Roberts.” [ADN.com, [9/18/16](#)]

A 14-Year-Old Anchorage Girl Died After She Was Given Heroin By 29-Year Old Sean Michael Warner. According to KTVA, “ANCHORAGE – A man who admitted to injecting heroin into a 14-year-old who later died has been sentenced on a single charge related to her death. Sean Michael Warner, 29, was sentenced to 18 years in prison by U.S. District Court Judge Sharon L. Gleason for the charge of distributing heroin. Warner pleaded guilty to the charge on Aug. 28 after agreeing to a plea deal that included a recommended sentence of 13 to 18 years.” [KTVA, [6/29/15](#)]

MARCH 2017: MURKOWSKI CRITICIZED THE HOUSE HEALTH CARE BILL FOR ITS LACK OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT ASSISTANCE

CNN: Lisa Murkowski Expressed Opposition To The House Health Care Bill Over Concerns That It Would “Cut Off Those Relying On Medicaid To Address Opioid Addiction And Mental Health Issues.” According to CNN, “Another issue that has split Senate and House Republicans is the proposed overhaul of the Medicaid program. Even before the House bill was released, four Senate Republicans -- Murkowski, Rob Portman of Ohio, Shelly Moore Capito of West Virginia, and Cory Gardner of Colorado -- of penned a letter to McConnell expressing concerns that the legislation would cut off those relying on Medicaid to address opioid addiction and mental health issues.” [CNN, [3/7/17](#)]

- **Lisa Murkowski Press Release: “Senators Portman, Capito, Gardner & Murkowski Outline Need To Protect Medicaid Expansion Recipients, Especially Those With Opioid And Mental Health Treatment.”** According to a Lisa Murkowski Press Release, “GOP Senators Say House Health Care Draft Lacks Key Protections for Medicaid Expansion Population[.] Senators Portman, Capito, Gardner & Murkowski Outline Need to Protect Medicaid Expansion Recipients, Especially Those With Opioid and Mental Health Treatment[.]” [Lisa Murkowski Press Release, [3/6/17](#)]

In 2015, Susan Collins’ Maine Had More Opioid-Related Deaths Than Car Crash Fatalities

OPIOIDS KILLED MORE MAINERS THAN MOTOR VEHICLES IN 2015

In 2015, Opioids Killed More Mainers Than Motor Vehicles For The First Time. According to the Bangor Daily News, “Drug overdose deaths caused by heroin, fentanyl, and other opioids last year surpassed

the number of motor vehicle deaths on Maine roads for the first time, according to new federal statistics.” [Bangor Daily News, [12/13/16](#)]

2015: NEARLY 9 OUT OF EVERY 10 DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS WERE OPIOID-RELATED

More Than 200 People Died From Opioid Overdoses In Maine During 2015, Nearly Nine Out Of Ten Drug Overdose Deaths. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 238 opioid overdose deaths in Maine in 2015, making up 88% of the state’s 269 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

Overdose Deaths Rose In Maine By 40 Percent During 2016. According to Maine Public, “But last year, overdose deaths in Maine soared by 40 percent. Gov. Paul LePage is now signaling that when it comes to treatment, he wants the state to try something new.” [Maine Public, [2/8/17](#)]

MANY MAINERS ARE UNABLE TO GET TREATMENT FOR DRUG ADDICTION, AS DEMAND FOR TREATMENT EXCEEDS SUPPLY

According To Law Enforcement Experts, Demand For Treatment For Drug Addiction In Maine Exceeded Availability, Especially For Those Without Health Insurance. According to the Portland Press Herald, “While the state has allocated additional resources to drug treatment and law enforcement, experts say demand for treatment far outstrips availability, especially for those without health insurance.” [Portland Press Herald, [3/3/16](#)]

Between 25,000 To 30,000 Mainers Sought Access To Drug Treatment Plans Without Being Able To Get It, According To The Substance Abuse And Mental Health Services Administration. According to the Portland Press Herald, “About 25,000 to 30,000 Mainers have sought access to drug treatment programs but have been unable to get it, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.” [Portland Press Herald, [8/23/16](#)]

During 2015, Only 15,500 Mainers Received Opioid Addiction Treatment. According to the Portland Press Herald, “About 15,500 Mainers received opioid addiction treatment in 2015, according to data released Monday by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.” [Portland Press Herald, [3/22/16](#)]

According To The Portland Press Herald, Tens Of Thousands Of Mainers Suffered From Opioid Addiction. According to the Portland Press Herald, “The death toll reached 376 last year, driven almost entirely by opioids – prescription painkillers, heroin and now fentanyl. More than one victim per day. More than car accidents. More than suicide. More than breast cancer. [...] As the public health crisis deepened, state policies made treatment less available to the tens of thousands of people addicted. Only now is Maine beginning to pay attention. For the victims and families left behind, it’s too little, too late.” [Portland Press Herald, [3/27/17](#)]

THE DEFEAT OF MEDICAID EXPANSION IN MAINE LED TO ALMOST 25,000 MAINERS LACKING NEEDED TREATMENT FOR ADDICTION

According To National Association Of Social Workers Maine Chapter Executive Director Lori Gramlich, The Lack Of Medicaid Expansion In Maine Meant That Almost 25,000 Mainers Did Not Receive Needed Treatment For Addiction. According to the Portland Press Herald, “Lori Gramlich,

executive director of the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, issued a statement Wednesday noting that provisions in the American Health Care Act could allow states to opt out of providing addiction treatment services. Gramlich noted that Maine's rejection of an expansion of Medicaid meant nearly 25,000 Mainers in need of treatment for addiction did not get help." [Portland Press Herald, [5/10/17](#)]

According To Industry Experts, The Defeat Of Medicaid Expansion In Maine Made It Financially Difficult To Offer Addiction Treatment To Patients. According to the Portland Press Herald, "About 15,500 Mainers received opioid addiction treatment in 2015, according to data released Monday by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. But public health experts say Maine's treatment options are sparse, and in 2015 the options decreased further because two treatment centers, Mercy Recovery Center in Westbrook and Spectrum Health Systems in Sanford, closed. Maine's low reimbursement rates and defeat of Medicaid expansion have made it financially difficult for treatment centers to offer broad access to patients, experts say." [Portland Press Herald, [3/22/16](#)]

THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IS TEARING APART MAINE FAMILIES

Maine Resident Michael Fielders Died Of A Heroin Overdose In 2016, 7 Years After Being Prescribed Painkillers For Hurting His Back. According to the Portland Press Herald, "When I hear these numbers, they are so sobering," said Cynthia Fielders of Eliot, whose son, Michael Fielders, 31, died of a heroin overdose Nov. 3. 'But if we sit back and do nothing, and put our blinders on, these numbers will continue to double or triple.' [...] Fielders said her son first became addicted to painkillers after hurting his back in 2009 and being prescribed Percocet. Four out of five new heroin users are first addicted to prescription opioids, according to the American Society of Addiction Medicine." [Portland Press Herald, [3/22/16](#)]

- **Fielders Left Behind Two Young Children.** According to the Portland Press Herald, "Cynthia and Michael Fielders were already caring for their grandchildren, Bentley, 3, and Mercedes, 2, because of their son Michael's addiction when he died of a heroin overdose. [...] 'When I hear these numbers, they are so sobering,' said Cynthia Fielders of Eliot, whose son, Michael Fielders, 31, died of a heroin overdose Nov. 3. 'But if we sit back and do nothing, and put our blinders on, these numbers will continue to double or triple.'" [Portland Press Herald, [3/22/16](#)]

Maine Resident Gail McCarthy Lost Two Adult Children To Drug Overdoses Within 17 Months. According to the Portland Press Herald, "On workdays, Gail McCarthy drives 70 miles to her job and then another 70 back home. [...] In November 2013, she lost her daughter, Ashley, to an overdose of methadone, which she bought on the street to avoid withdrawal symptoms from heroin addiction. She was 21. About 17 months later, her son, Matthew, died of an overdose of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid. He was 24." [Portland Press Herald, [4/3/17](#)]

- **McCarthy's Daughter Ashley Was Prescribed Opioids After Being Diagnosed With Uterine Cysts.** According to the Portland Press Herald, "Ashley and Matthew McCarthy were raised in Hampden, a mostly affluent suburb of Bangor. [...] Ashley was prescribed opioids after being diagnosed with painful uterine cysts. Her mother thinks that's how she got hooked." [Portland Press Herald, [4/3/17](#)]

Maine Resident Corey Coburn, Who Died From A Fentanyl Overdose In November 2015, Was Thrown Out Of An Outpatient Program For Smoking Pot. According to the Portland Press Herald, "Before he overdosed on fentanyl and died on his bedroom floor in November 2015, Corey Coburn had been in and out of treatment for opioid addiction several times. He enrolled twice in an intensive outpatient program, which included counseling and medication. He was thrown out the first time for smoking pot, and he relapsed shortly after completing the second program." [Portland Press Herald, [3/30/17](#)]

- **Coburn Didn't Have Insurance, And His Criminal History Disqualified Him A Number Of Rehabilitation Programs.** According to the Portland Press Herald, "Before he overdosed on fentanyl and died on his bedroom floor in November 2015, Corey Coburn had been in and out of treatment for opioid addiction several times. [...] His family tried to get him into a residential center, even out of state, but they couldn't get a bed. Coburn didn't have insurance, and the family couldn't pay. His criminal history, minor offenses all tied to his addiction, disqualified him for some programs." [Portland Press Herald, [3/30/17](#)]

Ronni Baker, A 23-Year-Old Mother Of A 9-Month-Old Infant, Overdosed On Heroin And Fentanyl In 2015. According to the Portland Press Herald, "In the bathroom next door, 23-year-old Ronni Baker overdosed on heroin and fentanyl two years ago. The blue urn with her ashes is downstairs in the living room of her parents, Matt and Cheryl Baker of Stow. 'It was a shock,' said Matt Baker. 'You're 49 or 50 years old, and you're thinking about retirement, and all of a sudden you're raising a 9-month-old.'" [Portland Press Herald, [4/13/17](#)]

- **The Child Was Left To Be Cared For By Her Grandparents, Both Of Whom Worked Full-Time Jobs.** According to the Portland Press Herald, "Cheryl, 52, works in special education in Fryeburg public schools. Matt, 50, is a longtime sergeant at the Oxford County Sheriff's Department. Both have full-time jobs, but Matt switched his schedule to work fewer night shifts after Ronni died. Cheryl sometimes rushes to leave work in time to pick Claire up from daycare or bring her to her dad's house for a visit. The couple joke about learning to change diapers all over again." [Portland Press Herald, [4/13/17](#)]

COLLINS: CUTTING MEDICAID FUNDS WOULD HAVE A "DEVASTATING IMPACT" ON OPIOID ADDICTS

Sen. Susan Collins Said that Cutting Funding For Medicaid Would Have A "Devastating Impact" On Opioid Addicts Who Relied On Medicaid To Cover Treatment For Addiction. According to the Bangor Daily News, "Slicing Medicaid could also make it difficult for opioid addicts who are counting on Medicaid for health exchange insurance to cover the treatment they need to free themselves of their addiction, Collins said. That could have 'a devastating impact,' she said." [Bangor Daily News, [6/22/17](#)]

In Ron Johnson's Wisconsin, Hundreds Die Each Year Of Opioid Overdoses While Thousands Are Denied Treatment Without An Expanded Medicaid Program

2015: OVER 600 PEOPLE DIED FROM OPIOID OVERDOSES, MORE THAN 2/3 OF ALL DRUG-RELATED DEATHS

Wisconsin: More Than 600 People Died From Opioid Overdoses, More Than Two-Thirds Of All Deaths From Drug Overdoses. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 622 opioid overdose deaths in Wisconsin in 2015, making up 71% of the state's 878 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

IF WISCONSIN EXPANDED MEDICAID, 120,000 ADDITIONAL WISCONSINITES COULD BE INSURED UNDER THE PROGRAM

The Obama Administration Found That 120,000 Additional People In Wisconsin Could Have Been Covered By Medicaid Expansion In That State. According to WITI, “The White House has released a report entitled ‘Missed Opportunities’ -- showing the effect of Governor Walker’s decision to turn away millions in federal money to expand BadgerCare. [...] The White House report examines the 24 states that chose to refuse the funds. It contends Wisconsin could have insured 120,000 more people by taking the money. The report says expansion would lead to 11,200 new jobs by 2017 and result in nearly \$2.6 billion in additional federal spending in Wisconsin.” [WITI, [7/2/14](#)]

OPIOIDS ARE KILLING PEOPLE OF ALL AGES ACROSS WISCONSIN

In 2016, Four Children Died In Wisconsin From Accidental Opioid Overdose. According to the Associated Press, “In 2000, 14 children in the U.S. under age 5 died after ingesting opioids. By 2015, that number climbed to 51, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, alone, four children died last year of accidental overdoses. Another 2-year-old perished in January.” [Associated Press, [3/23/17](#)]

Two-Year-Old Londyn Raine Robinson Sack Died After Ingesting An Opioid Obtained Illegally By Her Mother. According to the Associated Press, “At just 2 years old, Londyn Raine Robinson Sack was protective of her baby brother, Liam. [...] Londyn’s own mother was convicted of second-degree manslaughter and risk of injury to a child in connection with the Oct. 19, 2014, death of her daughter, who ingested an opioid known as Suboxone that was packaged in the form of a dissolving strip. Prosecutors in New Britain, Connecticut, said the drug was obtained illegally by her mother and was dispensed in a box, not a child-resistant container.” [Associated Press, [3/23/17](#)]

A Marine Corps Veteran Died Of An Opioid Overdose At A Wisconsin VA Hospital Nicknamed “Candy Land” For The Amount of Pain-Killer Prescriptions Given At The Center. According to NBC News, “A Wisconsin VA hospital nicknamed ‘Candy Land’ by some for an alarming surge in pain-killer prescriptions is under investigation — six months after a Marine Corps veteran died of an overdose in the psychiatric ward. [...] The amount of opiates doled out by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Tomah nearly quadrupled over eight years, under the leadership of the chief of staff, Dr. David Houlihan, as the non-profit Center for Investigative Reporting first revealed.” [NBC News, [2/24/15](#)]

- **The Number Of Opiates Prescribed At The VA Medical Center In Tomah, WI Nearly Quadrupled Over 8 Years.** According to NBC News, “The amount of opiates doled out by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Tomah nearly quadrupled over eight years, under the leadership of the chief of staff, Dr. David Houlihan, as the non-profit Center for Investigative Reporting first revealed.” [NBC News, [2/24/15](#)]
- **Veteran Jason Simcakoski Died Of “Mixed Drug Toxicity” After Being Prescribed An Opioid To Treat Addiction To Other Drugs.** According to NBC News, “Her 35-year-old son checked into the Tomah facility for a painkiller addiction and severe anxiety last summer. The married father was already taking more than a dozen drugs — including anti-psychotics, tranquilizers, and a painkiller — when Dr. David Houlihan added Suboxone, an opioid used to treat addiction, to the list. ‘I met with a lot of the nurses, counselors and everybody. And they all said to me that your son’s on too many meds,’ said Jason’s father, Marvin Simcakoski. Jason Simcakoski died weeks after being admitted of what the autopsy report called ‘mixed drug toxicity.’” [NBC News, [2/24/15](#)]

In Dean Heller's Nevada, High School Students Are Experimenting With Heroin At Alarming Rates

2015: MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF DRUG OVERDOSES IN NEVADA WERE OPIOID-RELATED

Nevada: Over 400 People Died From Opioid Overdoses In 2015, More Than Two-Thirds Of All Deaths From Drug Overdoses. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 419 opioid overdose deaths in Nevada in 2015, making up 68% of the state's 619 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

- **Nevada Division Of Public And Behavioral Health: Inpatient Hospitalizations For Opioids Nearly Doubled Between 2010 And 2015.** According to The Las Vegas Review-Journal, "Statistics from the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health show inpatient hospitalizations for opioids jumped from 4,518 in 2010 to 8,231 in 2015. During that same time, emergency room visits related to opioids more than doubled to 7,035 from 3,095." [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [4/27/17](#)]

Las Vegas Recorded A 43 Percent Increase In The Number Of Times Paramedics Administered Narcan, Which Blocked The Effects Of Opioids And Reverses An Overdose, In 2016. According to The Nevada Independent, "Meanwhile, the city of Las Vegas recorded a 43 percent increase in the number of times paramedics administered Narcan, which blocks the effects of opioids and reverses an overdose, last year compared with 2015. They administered the medication 596 times in 2015 and 853 times in 2016. In unincorporated parts of Clark County, paramedics administered Narcan 591 times last year, county officials said." [Nevada Independent, [2/26/17](#)]

The Amount Of Opioids Distributed To Each Adult In Nevada Was The Sixth-Highest In The Nation. According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, "Nevada was the sixth highest state in the amount of opioids distributed to each adult in a 2016 federal study." [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [6/15/17](#)]

OVER 200,000 NEVADANS GAINED HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER MEDICAID EXPANSION, INCLUDING OVER 28,000 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

ACA Medicaid Expansion Made Over 200,000 Nevadans Eligible For The Program. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Nevada's newly eligible enrollment under the ACA's Medicaid expansion was 203,900. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [6/22/17](#)]

- **Sen. Dean Heller Promised That He Wanted "To Make Sure The Rug Is Not Pulled Out From Under Nevada Or The More Than 200,000 Nevadans Who Received Insurance For The First Time Under Medicaid Expansion."** According to a press release by Senator Dean Heller, "Throughout the health care debate, I have made clear that I want to make sure the rug is not pulled out from under Nevada or the more than 200,000 Nevadans who received insurance for the first time under Medicaid expansion. At first glance, I have serious concerns about the bill's impact on the Nevadans who depend on Medicaid." [Senator Dean Heller press release, [6/22/17](#)]

28,080 Nevadans With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University's Wagner School of Public Service, there are 28,080

individuals “with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion” in Nevada. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

- **Nevada’s Republican Governor, Brian Sandoval: “It Appears That The Proposed Bill Will Dramatically Reduce Coverage And Will Negatively Impact Our Future State Budgets.”** According to The Associated Press, “The doubts about the latest plan from Washington came from Republicans, Democrats and the nation’s one independent governor. [...] Another was Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval, also a Republican. His decision to expand Medicaid has provided health coverage to more than 210,000 Nevada residents. ‘It appears that the proposed bill will dramatically reduce coverage and will negatively impact our future state budgets,’ he said in an emailed statement.” [Associated Press, [6/23/17](#)]

NEVADA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ADMIT TO USING HEROIN IN ALARMING NUMBERS

One In 5 Nevada High School Students Admitted To Abusing Prescription Drugs, Putting Them At Greater Risk When They Encountered Heroin. According to KOLO, “You’ll discover it in heroin and—guess what?—out here it’s cheaper. And here’s the scariest part: One in 5 Nevada high school students admits to abusing prescription drugs. When they encounter heroin, their young brains are already hard-wired for addiction, putting them at greater risk and making eventual recovery even more difficult.” [KOLO, [3/11/16](#)]

Three Percent Of Nevada High School Students, Some As Young As 14, Had Used Heroin At Least Once. According to The Associated Press, “Heroin was blamed for 50 deaths in 2012, up from 20 in 2010; 25 in 2009; and 33 the year before that. Overall, there were 732 deaths blamed on drug overdoses in 2012, the last year for which statistics are available. A report released in March on risky youth behavior said 3 percent of Nevada high school students, some as young as 14, have used heroin at least once.” [Associated Press, [4/5/14](#)]

Solutions Recovery Founder Dave Marlon: “I Believe You Can Buy A \$10 Balloon Of Heroin In Any School In The Valley Today.” According to CBS News Las Vegas, “Dave Marlon, founder of Solutions Recovery, says the old socioeconomic stereotype of drug users no longer holds. ‘This is showing up in Green Valley. It’s showing up in Summerlin. It’s showing up downtown. The opioid epidemic is the number one health problem in our community,’ he said. He says since his rehabilitation facility opened in Las Vegas 10 years ago, more women and teens are coming through the door. ‘I believe you can buy a \$10 balloon of heroin in any school in the valley today,’ Marlon said” [CBS News Las Vegas, [2/11/16](#)]

Henderson High School Student Aly Blackmore Was Known As A Happy Student Who Loved Her Friends And Volleyball. According to CBS News Las Vegas, “The number of people getting hooked has jumped significantly over the last 10 years. The faces of these addicts are also changing; more of them are younger, female and white. Experts are calling this problem an ‘epidemic’ in southern Nevada. Those who knew Aly Blackmore in high school in Henderson describe her as a happy student who loved her friends and volleyball.” [CBS News Las Vegas, [2/11/16](#)]

- **Blackmore Said Heroin Was Easily Available: “If You Handed It To Me, I Was Going To Do It, And 90 Percent Of The Time, It Was Heroin. We Could Walk Out Onto The Street And Find Someone.”** According to CBS News Las Vegas, “Blackmore says, for years, she had a secret life fueled by an addiction to heroin. ‘I was the type that would do anything,’ she said. ‘If you handed it to me, I was going to do it, and 90 percent of the time, it was heroin.’ She says finding her fix was easy. ‘We could walk out onto the street and find someone,’ she said.” [CBS News Las Vegas, [2/11/16](#)]

- **Blackmore: “I Went To Seven Funerals In 2015, And Five Of Them Were Heroin Related.”** According to CBS News Las Vegas, “I went to seven funerals in 2015, and five of them were heroin related,’ Blackmore said. Blackmore, now 21, is married and mother of a 7-month-old baby girl.” [CBS News Las Vegas, [2/11/16](#)]

24-Year-Old Las Vegas Native Taylor Burnett Began Using Drugs At Age 11, Beginning With Marijuana Before Moving On To Pills And Heroin. According to CBS News Las Vegas, “Dave Marlon, founder of Solutions Recovery, says the old socioeconomic stereotype of drug users no longer holds. [...] He says four out of five heroin users start with prescription pills – something 24-year-old Las Vegas native Taylor Burnett knows all too well. ‘Pretty much everything it touched, it messed up,’ he said. Burnett recently got clean at Solutions Recovery after getting into drugs at age 11. He started with pot before moving on to pills and heroin.” [CBS News Las Vegas, [2/11/16](#)]

A NEVADA FATHER OF FOUR HAD TWO CHILDREN BORN ADDICTED AND DIAGNOSED WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

38-Year-Old James Farley Became Addicted To Oxycodone After He Was Injured And Prescribed Medicine For Pain. According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, “But the family’s collective best efforts haven’t yet been able to pull 38-year-old brother James Farley from the abyss of oxycodone addiction. [...] As his sister recalls, James had behavior and drug problems in high school and a circle of friends that led him astray. After an incident a decade ago that left him injured, he received prescribed medicine for pain and quickly became addicted to oxycodone.” [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [2/1/16](#)]

A Father Of Four, Farley Had Two Children Born Addicted And Diagnosed With Learning Disabilities. According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, “But the family’s collective best efforts haven’t yet been able to pull 38-year-old brother James Farley from the abyss of oxycodone addiction. [...] Convicted of drug-related offenses and living in Tom Farley’s home in Mesa, Arizona, James Farley has fathered four children — two of whom were born addicted to opiates. One baby was in the neonatal intensive care unit for more than six weeks. While the father has been in and out of trouble and treatment, they have been diagnosed with learning disabilities.” [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [2/1/16](#)]

One Baby Was In The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit For More Than Six Weeks. According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, “Convicted of drug-related offenses and living in Tom Farley’s home in Mesa, Arizona, James Farley has fathered four children — two of whom were born addicted to opiates. One baby was in the neonatal intensive care unit for more than six weeks. While the father has been in and out of trouble and treatment, they have been diagnosed with learning disabilities.” [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [2/1/16](#)]

In Jeff Flake’s Arizona, Opioid Addiction Is Devastating Lives

2015: MORE THAN HALF OF ALL DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS IN ARIZONA WERE OPIOID-RELATED

Arizona: Nearly 700 People Died From Opioid Overdoses, More Than Half Of All Deaths From Drug Overdoses. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, there were 671 opioid overdose deaths in Arizona in 2015, making up 53% of the state’s 1,274 deaths from drug overdose. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [5/9/17](#)]

- **More Than Four In 10 Adults In Arizona Knew Someone Who Has Been Addicted To Prescription Painkillers, And A Higher Percentage Personally Knew Someone Who Had Taken A Prescription Opioid Which Had Not Been Prescribed To Them.** According to The Mojave Daily News, “More than four in 10 adults in Arizona know someone who has been addicted to prescription painkillers, according to a Morrison-Cronkite News poll. ‘Opioid addiction knows no boundaries,’ Special Agent Douglas W. Coleman, Phoenix division of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said. ‘It affects every demographic. It affects rich, poor, black, white. It affects everybody.’ The poll showed that 44.8 percent of adults in Arizona personally know someone who has taken a prescription opioid not prescribed to them and 41.8 percent know someone who has been addicted to prescription painkillers.” [Mojave Daily News, [4/16/17](#)]
- **Arizona Criminal Justice Commission: Enough Prescription Pain Relievers Were Dispensed In 2016 To Medicate Every Adult In Maricopa County Around-The-Clock For 2 Weeks.** According to KPNX, “Prescription opioid abuse is a prevalent issue in the U.S. and in Arizona, with the U.S. Surgeon General and the Arizona Governor’s office making efforts to address this epidemic. Enough prescription pain relievers were dispensed last year to medicate every adult in Maricopa County around-the-clock for 2 weeks – that’s 193 million pain reliever pills -- according to the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission.” [KPNX, [1/6/17](#)]

OVER 100,000 ARIZONANS BENEFITED FROM MEDICAID EXPANSION, INCLUDING OVER 15,000 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

ACA Medicaid Expansion Made Over 100,000 Arizonians Eligible For The Program. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Arizona’s newly eligible enrollment under the ACA’s Medicaid expansion was 110,400. [Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed [6/22/17](#)]

15,400 Arizonans With Mental Illness Or Substance Abuse Disorder Are Covered By Medicaid Expansion. According to Richard G. Frank of the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy and Margaret T. Morris of New York University’s Wagner School of Public Service, there are 15,400 individuals “with mental illness and substance use disorder conditions in Medicaid expansion” in Arizona. [Richard G. Frank and Margaret T. Morris – The Hill, [1/11/17](#); Background Information: Richard Frank Op-Ed, accessed [6/23/17](#)]

OPIOID ADDICTION IS DEVASTATING LIVES ACROSS ARIZONA

Jonathan, A Child In North Phoenix, Saw His Parents Divorce Because Of His Father’s Addiction To Prescription Painkillers. According to Cronkite News, “Janece, who lives in north Phoenix, said her son Jonathan was an easy-going kid growing up. ‘He was a bit mischievous, but not in a bad way. He would disrupt the class with his desire to make others laugh,’ she said. ‘He became an ambassador for the underachievers in fourth and fifth grade.’ Janece was no stranger to drug addiction, saying she divorced Jonathan’s father because he was addicted to prescription painkillers. Her older son used meth but stopped using after his girlfriend overdosed.” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]

- **Jonathan Started Using Marijuana As A Teenager And Began Using Heroin At Around Age 20, Becoming Instantly Addicted.** According to Cronkite News, “Jonathan started using marijuana as a teenager and graduated to heroin when he was around 20 years old, Janece said. ‘He told me the first time he did heroin he was addicted,’ she said. ‘There was no going back.’” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]

- **Jonathan Overdosed And His Mother Asked A Social Worker To Keep Him At The Hospital Overnight, But Was Told They Could Not Keep Him Because “If We Kept Every Person That OD’d Every Night, We Wouldn’t Have Beds For Any Of The Sick People.”** According to Cronkite News, “The two of them have been on the journey to recovery for three years, Janece said. In that time, she said she felt like she couldn’t find help anywhere. ‘One time when he OD’d, a social worker came to the hospital to speak with me. I asked her, ‘Just keep him overnight so I can find a place for him to go,’ she said. ‘This is the most shocking thing that she said to me. She said, ‘We can’t keep him. If we kept every person that OD’d every night, we wouldn’t have beds for any of the sick people.’” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]
- **Jonathan’s Mother Eventually Kicked Him Out And He Was Imprisoned For Breaking Into A Car To Steal Change.** According to Cronkite News, “From 2010 to 2013, Janece took her son to 15 therapists and medical professionals and to 10 drug centers. She knew her son was still using heroin during that time but didn’t confront him about it. ‘I just wanted it all to go away,’ she said. Janece got tired of spending the time and money, and she eventually kicked Jonathan out. He’s now serving a prison term for breaking into a car to steal change he saw in it, his mother said.” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]

Blake Landry, A Promising High School Soccer Star From Flagstaff, Started Using Heroin When She Was 20. According to Cronkite News, “‘I didn’t care about my family. I just really had no purpose.’ said Blake Landry, 23, once a promising high school soccer star from Flagstaff who started heroin when she was 20. ‘I was just, ‘Well I’m going to be a heroin addict for the rest of my life and that’s how it is.’” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]

- **Landry: “Well I’m Going To Be A Heroin Addict For The Rest Of My Life And That’s How It Is.”** According to Cronkite News, “‘I didn’t care about my family. I just really had no purpose.’ said Blake Landry, 23, once a promising high school soccer star from Flagstaff who started heroin when she was 20. ‘I was just, ‘Well I’m going to be a heroin addict for the rest of my life and that’s how it is.’ [...] At 16, Landry started smoking marijuana, doing ‘shrooms’ and then methamphetamine.” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]
- **In Order To Afford Drugs, Landry Danced For Men, Hung Out With Gangs And Sold Her Father’s Wedding Ring.** According to Cronkite News, “At 20, she was addicted to heroin, homeless and living out of a car with her boyfriend. To buy sacks of dope, she danced for men, hung out with gangs and sold her father’s wedding ring.” [Cronkite News, [1/13/15](#)]
- **Addicted To Heroin, Landry Became Homeless And Lived Out Of A Car With Her Boyfriend.** According to Cronkite News, “‘I didn’t care about my family. I just really had no purpose.’ said Blake Landry, 23, once a promising high school soccer star from Flagstaff who started heroin when she was 20. [...] At 20, she was addicted to heroin, homeless and living out of a car with her boyfriend.” [Cronkite News [1/13/15](#)]