

# Issue brief: Reports of increases in opioid-related overdose and other concerns during COVID pandemic

**\*Updated August 14, 2020**

As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues, so does the nation's opioid epidemic. The AMA is greatly concerned by an increasing number of reports from national, state and local media suggesting increases in opioid-related mortality—particularly from illicitly manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogs. More than 40 states have reported increases in opioid-related mortality as well as ongoing concerns for those with a mental illness or substance use disorder in counties and other areas within the state. This also includes new reports about the need for evidence-based harm reduction services, including sterile needle and syringe services and naloxone.

The AMA is pleased that the [U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) and [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration](#) (DEA) have provided increased flexibility for providing buprenorphine and methadone to patients with opioid use disorder. The AMA is further pleased at [increased flexibility provided by the DEA](#) to help patients with pain obtain necessary medications.

## The AMA urges governors and state legislatures to take action

- Governors must adopt the new SAMHSA and DEA rules and guidance in-full for the duration of the national emergency—this includes [flexibility for evaluation and prescribing requirements](#) using telemedicine;
- States must enact as part of their own Emergency Orders and other actions a complete removal of prior authorization, step therapy and other administrative barriers for medications used to treat opioid use disorder;
- States must [remove existing barriers for patients with pain](#) to obtain necessary medications. This includes removing arbitrary dose, quantity and refill restrictions on controlled substances; and
- States must enact, implement and support harm reduction strategies, including removing barriers to sterile needle and syringe services programs.

[Read the full range of AMA recommendations for states](#) to help patients with opioid use disorder and pain as well as how to further harm reduction efforts. [Also see this recent discussion of the nation's overdose epidemic](#) by three leading physicians and national experts, including AMA Immediate Past President Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA; Stephen Taylor, MD, MPH; and Charles Reznikoff, MD.

A sample of national and state reports are below.

For more information, please contact Daniel Blaney-Koen, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at [daniel.blaney-koen@ama-assn.org](mailto:daniel.blaney-koen@ama-assn.org) or (312) 464-4954.

## National reports

- **U.S. Sees Deadly Drug Overdose Spike During Pandemic.**  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/08/13/901627189/u-s-sees-deadly-drug-overdose-spike-during-pandemic> August 13, 2020
- **As overdoses rise during pandemic, 2 moms share their stories of loss.**  
<https://www.today.com/health/overdoses-rise-during-coronavirus-pandemic-moms-speak-out-t188420> August 5, 2020
- **AMA Urges Changes After Dramatic Increase in Illicit Opioid Fatalities.**  
<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/934548> July 24, 2020
- **Drug overdose deaths jump in 2019 to nearly 71,000, a record high, CDC says.**  
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/15/health/drug-overdose-deaths-2019/index.html> July 16, 2020
- **'Opioid overdoses are skyrocketing': as Covid-19 sweeps across US an old epidemic returns.** <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jul/09/coronavirus-pandemic-us-opioids-crisis> July 9, 2020
- **High Rate of Stimulant Use in Opioid ED Cases.**  
<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/933527> July 7, 2020
- **Coronavirus Crisis Disrupts Treatment For Another Epidemic: Addiction.**  
[https://khn.org/news/coronavirus-crisis-disrupts-treatment-for-another-epidemic-addiction/?utm\\_source=National+Conference+of+State+Legislatures&utm\\_campaign=e7504bd7d3-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_07\\_07\\_03\\_18&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1716623089-e7504bd7d3-377887712](https://khn.org/news/coronavirus-crisis-disrupts-treatment-for-another-epidemic-addiction/?utm_source=National+Conference+of+State+Legislatures&utm_campaign=e7504bd7d3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_07_07_03_18&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1716623089-e7504bd7d3-377887712) July 6, 2020
- **'Cries for help': Drug overdoses are soaring during the coronavirus pandemic.**  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/07/01/coronavirus-drug-overdose/> July 1, 2020
- **Expanded Telehealth Helps Communities Address Opioid Use Disorder During Pandemic; Practitioners see benefits for patients and providers, especially in rural areas.\*** <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2020/07/01/expanded-telehealth-helps-communities-address-opioid-use-disorder-during-pandemic> July 1, 2020
- **Pandemic unleashes a spike in overdose deaths.**  
<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2020/06/pandemic-unleashes-a-spike-in-overdose-deaths-1959428?source=email> June 29, 2020
- **Despite the Challenges, We Must Fight Harder to Address the Nation's Opioid Epidemic; Patrice A. Harris, MD.** <https://morningconsult.com/opinions/despite-the-challenges-we-must-fight-harder-to-address-the-nations-opioid-epidemic/> June 17, 2020.
- **A New Addiction Crisis: Treatment Centers Face Financial Collapse.**  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/06/15/865006675/a-new-addiction-crisis-treatment-centers-face-financial-collapse> June 15, 2020
- **Substance use up amid pandemic: survey.** <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/501923-substance-use-up-amid-pandemic-survey> June 9, 2020
- **The Escalation of the Opioid Epidemic Due to COVID-19 and Resulting Lessons About Treatment Alternatives.** <https://www.ajmc.com/journals/issue/2020/2020-vol26-n7/the-escalation-of-the-opioid-epidemic-due-to-covid19-and-resulting-lessons-about-treatment-alternatives> July 2020
- **Drug overdoses climb during COVID-19 pandemic; Officials nationwide report spikes less than a year after the Trump administration touted progress in battling the crisis.**  
<https://www.rollcall.com/2020/05/27/drug-overdoses-climb-during-covid-19-pandemic/> May 27, 2020

- **The pandemic is triggering opioid relapses across Appalachia.**  
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/14/health/opioids-addiction-appalachia-coronavirus-trnd/index.html> May 14, 2020
- **Don't Forget the Other Pandemic Killing Thousands of Americans.**  
<https://www.thedailybeast.com/opioid-deaths-surge-during-coronavirus-in-americas-overdose-capitals> May 4, 2020
- **The pandemic may fuel the next wave of the opioid crisis.**  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/coronavirus-pandemic-may-fuel-the-next-wave-of-the-opioid-crisis/> April 21, 2020

## State reports

### 1. Alabama

- **Drug Overdoses Increase During the Pandemic.** <https://wbhm.org/feature/2020/drug-overdoses-increase-during-the-pandemic/> July 20, 2020
- **Madison County seeing a spike in overdoses, deaths amid pandemic.**  
<https://www.rocketcitynow.com/article/news/local/madison-county-seeing-a-spike-in-overdoses-deaths-amid-pandemic/525-021e43d6-44de-4c50-99ee-a326f2394a22> May 13, 2020

### 2. Arizona

- **Health officials report increases in drug overdoses, suicides during COVID-19 pandemic.** <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2020/08/11/health-officials-report-increases-in-drug-overdoses-suicides-during-covid-19-pandemic/> August 11, 2020
- **Suicides, overdoses are up amid COVID-19 pandemic, according to health expert.**  
<https://www.fox10phoenix.com/news/suicides-overdoses-are-up-amid-covid-19-pandemic-according-to-health-experts> July 18, 2020
- **Deaths escalated as opioids flooded tribal lands, report says.** <https://katu.com/news/recover-northwest/report-deaths-skyrocketed-as-opioids-flooded-tribal-lands> June 30, 2020
- **The battle of addiction during the time of novel coronavirus: Mental anguish, idle hands may be recipe for relapse.** <https://www.yourvalley.net/stories/the-battle-of-addiction-during-the-time-of-novel-coronavirus,154044> April 20, 2020

### 3. Arkansas

- **Drug overdoses skyrocket in Fort Smith during COVID-19.**  
<https://www.arkansasnews.com/news/20200809/drug-overdoses-skyrocket-in-fort-smith-during-covid-19> August 9, 2020
- **Number of overdose saves tops 500 through Arkansas program.**  
<https://www.fox16.com/news/local-news/number-of-overdose-saves-tops-500-through-arkansas-program/> June 10, 2020
- **Number of Narcan 'saves' triple during COVID-19 pandemic.**  
<https://www.thv11.com/article/news/health/opioids/saving-a-generation/number-of-narcan-saves-triple-during-covid-19-pandemic/91-20cbe0b2-8cf1-454f-9ac7-493e1e1a7546> April 22, 2020

### 4. California

- **Colliding epidemics: Need for 'safe consumption sites' more dire in COVID era, scientists and lawmakers say.** <https://missionlocal.org/2020/07/colliding-epidemics-need-for-safe-consumtion-sites-more-dire-in-covid-era-scientists-and-lawmakers-say/> July 20, 2020
- **A collision of epidemics: Coronavirus disrupts addiction treatment.**

- <https://calmatters.org/projects/california-coronavirus-treatment-drugs-opioid-addiction/> June 23, 2020
- **Beware of Potentially Fatal Fentanyl Pills Disguised as Xanax.**  
<https://www.fresnosheriff.org/media-relations/beware-of-potentially-fatal-fentanyl-pills-disguised-as-xanax.html> May 13, 2020
  - **Man, woman overdose in car in Redwood Village; woman dies.**  
<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/story/2020-04-30/male-female-car-occupants-die-of-apparent-drug-overdoses> April 30, 2020
5. **Colorado**
- **Fentanyl And Meth Fuel Record Colorado Overdose Deaths Amid Coronavirus Pandemic.** <https://www.cpr.org/2020/08/07/colorado-fentanyl-meth-overdose-deaths-coronavirus-pandemic/> August 7, 2020.
  - **Opioid crisis in Colorado could get worse amid pandemic.**  
<https://apnews.com/bf1c11ac45d63808ffae945c750cd81> June 28, 2020
  - **After COVID-19 addiction treatment may never be the same.**  
[https://www.gjsentinel.com/opinion/columns/after-covid-19-addiction-treatment-may-never-be-the-same/article\\_cf73cf6e-a9d9-11ea-8370-7358eaef6d90.html](https://www.gjsentinel.com/opinion/columns/after-covid-19-addiction-treatment-may-never-be-the-same/article_cf73cf6e-a9d9-11ea-8370-7358eaef6d90.html) June 8, 2020
  - **Struggling with addiction in quarantine? You're not alone.** <https://krdo.com/news/local-news/2020/04/23/struggling-with-addiction-in-quarantine-youre-not-alone/> April 23, 2020
6. **Connecticut**
- **Two epidemics taking a toll in CT as opioid overdoses rise amid coronavirus.**  
[https://www.connecticutmag.com/health-and-science/twin-epidemics-taking-a-toll-in-ct-as-opioid-overdoses-rise-amid-coronavirus/article\\_c4e0eb86-d4d1-11ea-ab35-f7ab9cf49d13.html](https://www.connecticutmag.com/health-and-science/twin-epidemics-taking-a-toll-in-ct-as-opioid-overdoses-rise-amid-coronavirus/article_c4e0eb86-d4d1-11ea-ab35-f7ab9cf49d13.html) August 2, 2020
  - **With over 1,000 Connecticut deaths last year, opioids demand even greater attention during pandemic.** <https://ctmirror.org/2020/07/09/with-over-1000-deaths-last-year-opioids-demand-even-greater-attention-during-pandemic/> July 9, 2020
7. **Delaware**
- **Commissioner Navarro Partners with Aquila to Distribute Overdose Medication.**  
<https://news.delaware.gov/2020/07/20/commissioner-navarro-partners-with-aquila-to-distribute-overdose-medication/> July 20, 2020
  - **Providers say drug and alcohol use up during pandemic following record year of Delaware overdoses.** <https://www.delawarepublic.org/post/providers-say-drug-and-alcohol-use-during-pandemic-following-record-year-delaware-overdoses> June 21, 2020
  - **Suspected Overdose Deaths for May in Delaware Tie Previous Monthly High Set in 2018.** <https://news.delaware.gov/2020/06/16/suspected-overdose-deaths-for-may-in-delaware-tie-previous-monthly-high-set-in-2018/> June 16, 2020
8. **District of Columbia**
- **One doctor is working to fight D.C.'s opioid epidemic, even as a pandemic rages.**  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/one-doctor-is-working-to-fight-dcs-opioid-epidemic-even-as-a-pandemic-rages/2020/08/04/c5c1cc54-d662-11ea-aff6-220dd3a14741\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/one-doctor-is-working-to-fight-dcs-opioid-epidemic-even-as-a-pandemic-rages/2020/08/04/c5c1cc54-d662-11ea-aff6-220dd3a14741_story.html) August 4, 2020
9. **Florida**
- **Overdose calls up 40% during COVID-19 pandemic; treatment centers seeing relapses in long-time sober patients.**  
<https://www.firstcoastnews.com/article/entertainment/television/programs/gmj/jfrd->

[averaging-15-overdose-calls-a-day-group-provides-narcan-training-in-response/77-fa78a385-d445-4e64-b31c-bcabb57a0925](https://www.fox13news.com/news/manatee-county-reports-44-increase-in-opioid-overdoses-since-last-year) July 23, 2020

- **Manatee County reports 44% increase in opioid overdoses since last year.**  
<https://www.fox13news.com/news/manatee-county-reports-44-increase-in-opioid-overdoses-since-last-year> July 7, 2020
- **Fake pills laced with fentanyl are causing overdoses in west Pasco, deputies say.**  
<https://www.tampabay.com/news/pasco/2020/05/05/fake-pills-laced-with-fentanyl-are-causing-overdoses-in-west-pasco-deputies-say/> May 5, 2020
- **Jacksonville overdose calls increased 20% in March.**  
<https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2020/04/14/jfrd-jacksonville-overdose-calls-increased-by-20-in-march/> April 13, 2020.

## 10. Georgia

- **DPH warns of overdose increases in Georgia amid COVID-19.** <https://times-herald.com/news/2020/08/dph-warns-of-overdose-increases-in-georgia-amid-covid-19> August 7, 2020
- **Health chief warns of drug overdose increase during pandemic.**  
[https://www.valdostadailytimes.com/news/ga\\_fl\\_news/health-chief-warns-of-drug-overdose-increase-during-pandemic/article\\_bf227014-b700-11ea-a153-035beb482c4e.html](https://www.valdostadailytimes.com/news/ga_fl_news/health-chief-warns-of-drug-overdose-increase-during-pandemic/article_bf227014-b700-11ea-a153-035beb482c4e.html) June 29, 2020
- **Addiction Recovery Leaders Say Opioid Crisis Didn't Stop When Pandemic Began.**  
<https://www.gpbnews.org/post/addiction-recovery-leaders-say-opioid-crisis-didnt-stop-when-pandemic-began> April 20, 2020

## 11. Illinois

- **Pritzker Administration Announces Over \$2 million in Fines for Major Health Insurance Companies Violating Illinois Mental Health Parity Laws CIGNA Healthcare of IL, UnitedHealthcare, CIGNA Health and Life, HCSC, and Celtic found to be in violation of Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act**  
[https://www2.illinois.gov/IISNews/21819-IDOI\\_Press\\_Release.pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/IISNews/21819-IDOI_Press_Release.pdf) July 15, 2020
- **Overdose Deaths Have Skyrocketed in Chicago, and the Coronavirus Pandemic May Be Making It Worse.** <https://www.propublica.org/article/overdose-deaths-have-skyrocketed-in-chicago-and-the-coronavirus-pandemic-may-be-making-it-worse> May 30, 2020.
- **COVID-19 pandemic causes needle exchange programs to cut back.**  
<https://abc7chicago.com/needle-exchange-programs-chicago-syringe-coronavirus-program-covid-19/6206885/> May 23, 2020.
- **DuPage sees ‘unusual spike’ in overdose deaths during coronavirus pandemic: coroner.**  
<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2020/5/13/21257820/dupage-opioid-overdose-death-coronavirus-coroner-richard-jorgensen-covid-19> May 13, 2020.

## 12. Indiana

- **An epidemic of their own; relapse and overdose rates surge amidst coronavirus lockdowns.** <https://www.wane.com/community/health/coronavirus/an-epidemic-of-their-own-relapse-and-overdose-rates-surge-amidst-coronavirus-lockdowns/> August 12, 2020
- **‘There needs to be awareness’: Addiction recovery help still available during pandemic.**  
[http://www.bcdemocrat.com/2020/06/16/there\\_needs\\_to\\_be\\_awareness\\_addiction\\_recovery\\_help\\_still\\_available\\_during\\_pandemic/](http://www.bcdemocrat.com/2020/06/16/there_needs_to_be_awareness_addiction_recovery_help_still_available_during_pandemic/) June 16, 2020
- **Naloxone Use, Opioid Overdoses Increase Amid Virus Pandemic.**  
<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2020-05-29/naloxone-use-opioid-overdoses-increase-amid-virus-pandemic> May 29, 2020
- **An Indiana Police Dept. No Longer Reversing Overdoses During Pandemic.**

<https://filtermag.org/cops-naloxone-coronavirus/> April 24, 2020

### 13. Kentucky

- **The perfect storm: Drug overdoses spike across Kentucky as COVID-19 pandemic continues.** [https://www.news-expressky.com/news/article\\_1b0f3e4c-d304-11ea-9b6b-4f593d08594a.html](https://www.news-expressky.com/news/article_1b0f3e4c-d304-11ea-9b6b-4f593d08594a.html) [https://www.news-expressky.com/news/article\\_1b0f3e4c-d304-11ea-9b6b-4f593d08594a.html](https://www.news-expressky.com/news/article_1b0f3e4c-d304-11ea-9b6b-4f593d08594a.html) July 31, 2020.
- **Kentucky Drug Overdoses Spike During COVID-19 Shutdown.** <http://www.mc.uky.edu/kiprc/pubs/files/July%202020%20KyOD2A%20final.pdf> July 2020
- **Fatal overdoses, use of syringe exchange soar in Lexington. Some blame COVID-19.** <https://www.kentucky.com/news/coronavirus/article242926656.html> May 28, 2020
- **OPD, DCSO records increase in overdoses on altered pills.** <https://www.14news.com/2020/05/26/opd-seeing-increase-overdoses-altered-pills/> May 27, 2020

### 14. Louisiana

- **Dr. Nicholas Goeders: The hidden health crisis resulting from COVID-19.** <https://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/opinion/columnists/2020/07/20/dr-nicholas-goeders-hidden-health-crisis-results-covid-19/5471082002/> July 23, 2020
- **People who use drugs are more vulnerable to coronavirus. Here's what clinics are doing to help.** [https://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/coronavirus/article\\_f80cf77e-84fa-11ea-88d5-2b37dc9dd966.html](https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/coronavirus/article_f80cf77e-84fa-11ea-88d5-2b37dc9dd966.html) May 3, 2020

### 15. Maine

- **Maine drug deaths rose as the state shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** <https://bangordailynews.com/2020/07/17/news/maine-drug-deaths-rose-as-the-state-shut-down-due-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/> July 17, 2020
- **Report: Pandemic contributes to increase in drug overdoses.** <https://www.ctpost.com/news/article/Report-Pandemic-contributes-to-increase-in-drug-15415498.php> July 17, 2020
- **Overdose risk during pandemic is tragic reality for some families.** <https://www.pressherald.com/2020/04/20/overdose-risk-during-pandemic-is-tragic-reality-for-some-families/#> April 20, 2020

### 16. Maryland

- **Drug overdose alert issued in Carroll County.** <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/carroll/news/cc-carroll-overdose-alert-july-31-20200731-23bd6mwt5zh5rpqrdrpaqwajyi-story.html> July 31, 2020
- **Health officials say COVID-19 might be worsening opioid crisis.** [https://www.times-news.com/news/local\\_news/health-officials-say-covid-19-might-be-worsening-opioid-crisis/article\\_57e05f07-8018-5b7a-b678-a3cceffdf8d.html](https://www.times-news.com/news/local_news/health-officials-say-covid-19-might-be-worsening-opioid-crisis/article_57e05f07-8018-5b7a-b678-a3cceffdf8d.html) July 7, 2020
- **Opioid-related deaths make a disappointing uptick in early 2020, possibly related to coronavirus.** <https://www.baltimoresun.com/health/bs-hs-overdose-deaths-first-quarter-20200611-r5pvlyzqrffo3ndvwc2oh3y7cy-story.html> June 11, 2020
- **Pandemic cited as Md. opioid fatalities inch up.** <https://thedailyrecord.com/2020/06/10/pandemic-cited-as-md-opioid-fatalities-inch-up> June 10, 2020

## 17. Massachusetts

- **SouthCoast doctors say telemedicine has proven its worth, hope it will continue.\***  
<https://www.southcoasttoday.com/news/20200528/southcoast-doctors-say-telemedicine-has-proven-its-worth-hope-it-will-continue> May 28, 2020
- **The Pandemic Has Changed Addiction Treatment, Some Hope For Good.\***  
<https://www.wbur.org/commonhealth/2020/05/21/coronavirus-addiction-treatment-changes> May 21, 2020

## 18. Michigan

- **Naloxone kits could end up being lifesavers.**  
<https://www.miningjournal.net/opinion/editorial/2020/08/naloxone-kits-could-end-up-being-lifesavers/> August 13, 2020.
- **Michigan to give opioid antidote for free to community groups, residents.**  
<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/06/30/michigan-give-opioid-antidote-free-community-groups-residents/3284377001/> June 30, 2020
- **Push to telehealth means more medication to treat addiction in northern Michigan.\***  
<https://www.interlochenpublicradio.org/post/push-telehealth-means-more-medication-treat-addiction-northern-michigan> May 7, 2020
- **20% increase in patients seeking substance abuse treatment.**  
<https://www.fox17online.com/news/local-news/grand-rapids/20-increase-in-patients-seeking-substance-abuse-treatment> May 2, 2020

## 19. Minnesota

- **DEA: Significant increase in counterfeit pills in Minnesota.** <https://kstp.com/news/drug-enforcement-administration-says-significant-increase-in-counterfeit-pills-in-minnesota/5824400/?cat=1> August 12, 2020
- **In Duluth, ODs spike as pandemic decreases access to aid; The pandemic might be increasing the demand for dangerous drugs.** <https://www.startribune.com/in-duluth-ods-spike-as-pandemic-decreases-access-to-aid/570895192/> May 31, 2020
- **St. Paul Police Issue Alert After 28 Suspected Overdoses In 6 Days, 2 Deaths.**  
<https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2020/03/05/st-paul-police-issue-alert-after-28-suspected-overdoses-in-6-days-2-deaths/> March 5, 2020

## 20. Missouri

- **Opioid overdose deaths decline statewide in 2019, but rise for Black men.**  
<https://www.news-leader.com/story/news/local/ozarks/2020/07/20/opioid-overdose-deaths-decline-overall-statewide-2019/5428380002/> July 20, 2020
- **New website provides help with drug addiction for St. Louis area residents.**  
[https://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/coronavirus/new-website-provides-help-with-drug-addiction-for-st-louis-area-residents/article\\_1b9da3e7-2fe1-50a2-9c7b-8910c12a16a4.html](https://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/coronavirus/new-website-provides-help-with-drug-addiction-for-st-louis-area-residents/article_1b9da3e7-2fe1-50a2-9c7b-8910c12a16a4.html) June 2, 2020
- **Springfield area already sees uptick in suicides, ODs. Experts worry crisis is coming.**  
<https://www.news-leader.com/story/news/local/ozarks/2020/05/17/uptick-suicides-locally-mental-health-experts-warn-crisis-looms/5201866002/> May 16, 2020

## 21. Montana

- **County applies for opioid program.** <https://www.mtairynews.com/news/88655/county-applies-for-opioid-program> July 26, 2020
- **Police blame super-potent heroin for one death, several overdoses.**  
<https://mtstandard.com/news/state-and-regional/crime-and-courts/police-blame-super-potent-heroin-for-one-death-several-overdoses/>

[heroin-for-one-death-several-overdoses/article\\_f07c07fe-7308-5efb-850d-e2fb2ba07e92.html](https://www.kolotv.com/content/news/Teen-overdose-deaths-point-to-growing-problem-568505931.html)  
 April 3, 2020

**22. Nevada**

- **Fentanyl contributes to a rising death toll in Southern Nevada.**  
<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2020/jul/29/fentanyl-contributes-rising-death-toll-las-vegas/>  
 July 29, 2020
- **Teen overdose deaths point to growing problem.**  
<https://www.kolotv.com/content/news/Teen-overdose-deaths-point-to-growing-problem-568505931.html> March 4, 2020

**23. New Hampshire**

- **New law requires opioid treatment in county jails.\***  
<https://www.concordmonitor.com/Opioid-Treatment-New-Hampshire-Prisons-35593754> July 29, 2020
- **Opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone to be free at Planned Parenthood.**  
<https://www.vnews.com/Planned-Parenthood-clinics-in-Claremont-and-Keene-begin-offering-overdose-reversal-drug-34701777> June 10, 2020

**24. New Jersey**

- **Is the COVID-19 pandemic fueling a 20% rise in NJ overdose deaths?**  
<https://www.njherald.com/news/20200709/is-covid-19-pandemic-fueling-20-rise-in-nj-overdose-deaths> July 9, 2020
- **Naloxone By Mail? What N.J. Addiction Help Looks Like During COVID-19.**  
<https://www.wbgo.org/post/naloxone-mail-what-nj-addiction-help-looks-during-covid-19#stream/0> April 24, 2020

**25. New York**

- **Erie County alerts community to deaths due to suspected cocaine plus opioid overdoses.**  
<https://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2020/07/28/142558/erie-county-alerts-community-to-deaths-due-to-suspected-cocaine-plus-opioid-overdoses> July 28, 2020
- **More New Yorkers know someone who abuses opioids or died in an overdose, Siena survey finds; More in NY touched by opioids as support for treatment grows.**  
<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Siena-poll-More-in-NY-touched-by-opioids-as-15413678.php>  
<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Siena-poll-More-in-NY-touched-by-opioids-as-15413678.php> July 19, 2020
- **Federal Government Approves Methadone Deliveries During Pandemic.**  
<https://www.kunc.org/post/federal-government-approves-methadone-deliveries-during-pandemic#stream/0> June 28, 2020
- **Opioid Addiction, Overdoses on Rise: DA.**  
<http://theforumnewsgroup.com/2020/06/05/opioid-addiction-overdoses-on-rise-da/> June 5, 2020
- **COVID-19 cited in spike of opioid overdoses; Pandemic has worsened the opioid crisis. More people are dying of overdoses and fewer are being admitted for treatment.**  
<https://www.investigativepost.org/2020/05/21/covid-19-cited-in-spike-of-opioid-overdoses/>  
 May 21, 2020
- **Columbia County reports second spike in overdoses since pandemic arrived.**  
[https://www.dailyfreeman.com/news/local-news/columbia-county-reports-second-spike-in-overdoses-since-pandemic-arrived/article\\_e2493a20-85a3-11ea-993f-7bd5dfd43695.html](https://www.dailyfreeman.com/news/local-news/columbia-county-reports-second-spike-in-overdoses-since-pandemic-arrived/article_e2493a20-85a3-11ea-993f-7bd5dfd43695.html)  
 April 23, 2020
- **As overdoses spike, local experts remind people help is available.** (Albany, Greene,



Rensselaer counties) <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/As-overdoses-spike-Capital-Region-experts-remind-15207385.php> April 17, 2020

## 26. North Carolina

- **NC organizations fighting the rural opioid crisis receive a \$4M federal boost.**  
<https://www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2020/08/14/nc-organizations-fighting-the-rural-opioid-crisis-receive-a-4m-federal-boost/> August 14, 2020
- **Overdoses way up, officials try new approach to fighting drug abuse during pandemic.**  
[https://greensboro.com/rockingham\\_now/news/overdoses-way-up-officials-try-new-approach-to-fighting-drug-abuse-during-pandemic/article\\_863d0ae7-62b0-51f8-8df3-e9dc9396b0db.html](https://greensboro.com/rockingham_now/news/overdoses-way-up-officials-try-new-approach-to-fighting-drug-abuse-during-pandemic/article_863d0ae7-62b0-51f8-8df3-e9dc9396b0db.html) August 7, 2020
- **Increase in overdose emergency department visits seen in Carteret County.**  
<https://wcti12.com/news/local/county-sees-increase-in-overdoses-resources-available-for-those-in-need> April 27, 2020

## 27. North Dakota

- **Drug overdose death raises concerns in the area.**  
<https://www.newsdakota.com/2020/03/10/drug-overdose-death-raises-concerns-in-the-area/> March 10, 2020
- **Drug overdose deaths climb dramatically in Minot; Fentanyl use frightening.**  
<https://www.minotdailynews.com/news/local-news/2020/05/drug-overdose-deaths-climb-dramatically-in-minot/> May 8, 2020

## 28. Ohio

- **Ohio drug overdose deaths back on rise.**  
<https://www.newarkadvocate.com/story/news/local/2020/07/20/ohio-drug-overdose-deaths-back-on-rise/5473138002/> July 20, 2020
- **Overdose Incidents Rose Sharply Around Ohio Valley During Pandemic.**  
<https://wfpl.org/overdose-incidents-rose-sharply-around-ohio-valley-during-pandemic/> July 5, 2020
- **Coronavirus can't stem central Ohio opioid abuse.**  
<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20200603/coronavirus-cant-stem-central-ohio-opioid-abuse> June 5, 2020
- **Don't forget the other epidemic; editorial.**  
<https://www.toledoblade.com/opinion/editorials/2020/05/31/dont-forget-other-epidemic-opioids-naloxone-toledo-lucas-county/stories/20200526122> May 30, 2020
- **Narcan handed out to step opioid overdose rise amid COVID-19.**  
<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20200523/narcan-handed-out-to-stem-opioid-overdose-rise-amid-covid-19> May 23, 2020
- **Ohio County Prosecutor: Pandemic Puts More Stress On Families Dealing With Addiction.** <https://www.iowapublicradio.org/post/ohio-county-prosecutor-pandemic-puts-more-stress-families-dealing-addiction#stream/0> April 29, 2020
- **Coroner: 6 overdose deaths in Franklin County Friday.**  
<https://www.nbc4i.com/news/local-news/coroner-6-overdose-deaths-in-franklin-county-friday/> April 25, 2020
- **Health officials fear COVID-19 could trigger rise in drug overdoses.**  
<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20200420/health-officials-fear-covid-19-could-trigger-rise-in-drug-overdoses> April 20, 2020
- **HEALTH ALERT: Canton latest to close its syringe program.**

<https://www.harmreductionohio.org/covid-19-updates-syringe-programs-ongoing/> March 29, 2020

### 29. Oklahoma

- **Oklahoma recovery center reports surge in alcohol abuse.**  
<https://okcfox.com/news/local/oklahoma-recovery-center-reports-surge-in-alcohol-abuse> July 20, 2020
- **Deaths caused by fake pills continue to climb in Oklahoma, with links to North Texas.**  
<https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/crime/article243600002.html> June 17, 2020

### 30. Oregon

- **Illicit opioid deaths on the rise, in spite of doctors working against overdoses: report.**  
<https://katu.com/news/recover-northwest/illicit-opioid-deaths-on-the-rise-in-spite-of-doctors-working-against-overdoses-report> August 11, 2020.
- **'People are struggling': Oregon mental health groups make call to action during COVID-19.** <https://www.kgw.com/article/news/health/mental-health-and-addiction-supports-during-covid19/283-633fa303-b276-4893-8f79-349aca351f13> May 1, 2020.

### 31. Pennsylvania

- **With overdose deaths up during the pandemic, Philadelphia fights for a legal safe injection site; "You can't put a dead person into recovery. It doesn't work that way. At Safehouse, they have a chance to live."** <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/overdose-deaths-during-pandemic-philadelphia-fights-legal-safe-injection-site-n1235583> August 2, 2020.
- **In Pennsylvania, overdose deaths were falling. Then COVID-19 hit.**  
<https://theappeal.org/pennsylvania-overdose-crisis-covid/> July 6, 2020.
- **Cumberland County coroner's office reports an uptick in overdose deaths during coronavirus pandemic.** [https://cumberlink.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/cumberland-county-coroners-office-reports-an-uptick-in-overdose-deaths-during-coronavirus-pandemic/article\\_ad653521-dc48-5f8f-b6c0-359cdf90bb4d.html](https://cumberlink.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/cumberland-county-coroners-office-reports-an-uptick-in-overdose-deaths-during-coronavirus-pandemic/article_ad653521-dc48-5f8f-b6c0-359cdf90bb4d.html) May 3, 2020
- **Overdose deaths skyrocket in Pennsylvania during COVID-19 pandemic.**  
<https://local21news.com/news/local/overdose-deaths-skyrocket-in-pennsylvania-during-covid-19-pandemic> (York and Cumberland counties) April 22, 2020
- **Syringe exchanges deemed 'life-sustaining' during Pa. coronavirus shutdown, raising hopes for eventual legalization.** <https://www.post-gazette.com/news/health/2020/03/30/syringe-exchanges-pa-prevention-point-pittsburgh-needles-covid-19-addiction-services/stories/202003300062> March 30, 2020

### 32. Rhode Island

- **Another pandemic fallout: Deaths from accidental drug overdoses are soaring in Rhode Island.** <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/08/05/metro/another-pandemic-fallout-deaths-accidental-drug-overdoses-are-soaring-rhode-island/> August 5, 2020
- **In COVID-19's shadow, R.I. overdose deaths spiral. This 24/7 hotline gets around barriers to offer warmth, relief, treatment.**  
<https://www.providencejournal.com/news/20200703/in-covid-19s-shadow-ri-overdose-deaths-spiral-this-247-hotline-gets-around-barriers-to-offer-warmth-relief-treatment> July 3, 2020
- **Rhode Island Sees 22% Increase in Drug Overdose Deaths.**  
<https://www.portsmouthpress.com/2020/06/23/rhode-island-sees-22-increase-in-drug-overdose-deaths/> June 23, 2020

### 33. South Carolina

- **Health experts, recovery organizations fear ‘frightening’ rise in S.C. opioid overdoses.** <https://www.live5news.com/2020/07/30/pandemic-blamed-increase-drug-overdoses/> July 30, 2020
- **Spike in substance abuse seen in Aiken County as coronavirus disruptions continue.** [https://www.aikenstandard.com/coronavirus/spike-in-substance-abuse-seen-in-aiken-county-as-coronavirus-disruptions-continue/article\\_beb128e4-7e59-11ea-96e3-07b824c80035.html](https://www.aikenstandard.com/coronavirus/spike-in-substance-abuse-seen-in-aiken-county-as-coronavirus-disruptions-continue/article_beb128e4-7e59-11ea-96e3-07b824c80035.html) April 15, 2020

### 34. Tennessee

- **Knox County sees increase of overdose-related deaths since start of coronavirus pandemic.** <https://wreg.com/news/knox-county-sees-increase-of-overdose-related-deaths-since-start-of-coronavirus-pandemic/> July 21, 2020
- **Nashville doctors say they’ve seen a rise in polydrug overdoses during COVID-19 pandemic.** <https://www.wkrn.com/tennessee-overdose-crisis/nashville-doctors-say-theyve-seen-a-rise-in-polydrug-overdoses-during-covid-19-pandemic/> June 23, 2020
- **Opioid crisis sees impact of COVID-19 in Middle Tennessee.** <https://www.wkrn.com/community/health/coronavirus/opioid-crisis-sees-impact-of-covid-19-in-middle-tennessee/> May 8, 2020

### 35. Texas

- **‘I am alone’: Opioid relapses on the rise as COVID-19 interrupts drug addiction recovery in Dallas.** <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/2020/08/13/dallas-methadone-clinics-are-overwhelmed-by-an-influx-of-patients-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/> August 13, 2020
- **WilCo sees spike in opioid overdose calls, counterfeit pills.** <https://talk1370.radio.com/articles/wilco-sees-spike-in-opioid-overdose-calls-counterfeit-pills> (Williamson County) April 17, 2020

### 36. Vermont

- **Vermont gets \$2 million for programs targeting rural addiction.** <https://vermontbiz.com/news/2020/august/07/vermont-gets-2-million-programs-targeting-rural-addiction> August 7, 2020
- **Opioid overdoses rise in pandemic.** <https://www.vnews.com/Overdose-rates-trend-upward-in-Twin-States-amid-pandemic-34882142> June 22, 2020
- **As Vermont drug deaths drop, Brattleboro hits a record high.** <https://vtdigger.org/2020/05/14/as-vermont-drug-deaths-drop-brattleboro-hits-a-record-high/> May 14, 2020

### 37. Virginia

- **With drug overdose cases up 60% in Richmond area, Henrico allocates \$184,000 to addiction recovery, jail diversion efforts.** [https://richmond.com/news/local/with-drug-overdose-cases-up-60-in-richmond-area-henrico-allocates-184-000-to-addiction/article\\_ba6c5e48-8243-564e-b389-f6454d05f5ee.html](https://richmond.com/news/local/with-drug-overdose-cases-up-60-in-richmond-area-henrico-allocates-184-000-to-addiction/article_ba6c5e48-8243-564e-b389-f6454d05f5ee.html) July 10, 2020
- **Opioid Overdose Deaths Plunge in Virginia Counties After Influx of Naloxone. Harm reduction has worked, but causes for concern during pandemic remain.\*** <https://www.directrelief.org/2020/05/opioid-overdose-deaths-plunge-in-virginia-counties-after-influx-of-naloxone/> May 24, 2020

### 38. Washington

- **Public health officials warn of fentanyl in black tar heroin.** <https://komonews.com/news/local/public-health-officials-warn-of-fentanyl-in-black-tar-heroin> June 11, 2020
- **Seattle sees spike in fentanyl overdose deaths.** <https://dailyhive.com/seattle/king-county-spike-overdose-deaths> April 24, 2020

### 39. West Virginia

- **Increase in overdose deaths reported in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.** <https://www.whsv.com/2020/07/21/increase-in-overdose-deaths-reported-in-the-northern-shenandoah-valley/> July 21, 2020
- **'How are we going to keep people alive?' Behind the pandemic, overdoses are rising across West Virginia.** [https://www.wvgazettemail.com/coronavirus/how-are-we-going-to-keep-people-alive-behind-the-pandemic-overdoses-are-rising-across/article\\_6df7f23b-ef35-54fc-94e3-360662f5a123.html](https://www.wvgazettemail.com/coronavirus/how-are-we-going-to-keep-people-alive-behind-the-pandemic-overdoses-are-rising-across/article_6df7f23b-ef35-54fc-94e3-360662f5a123.html) June 20, 2020
- **Police: Three people overdose on opioids at same time, same place in North Wheeling.** <https://wtov9.com/news/local/police-three-people-overdose-on-opioids-at-same-time-same-place-in-north-wheeling> May 16, 2020
- **Overdose deaths outpacing COVID-19 deaths in Tri-State area.** [https://www.heraldmillmedia.com/news/special/coronavirus/overdose-deaths-outpacing-covid-19-deaths-in-tri-state-area/article\\_a36e41cf-8c97-5881-9aed-0668b24b67c2.html](https://www.heraldmillmedia.com/news/special/coronavirus/overdose-deaths-outpacing-covid-19-deaths-in-tri-state-area/article_a36e41cf-8c97-5881-9aed-0668b24b67c2.html) May 10, 2020.

### 40. Wisconsin

- **Overdose Surge Mirrors Coronavirus Pandemic; Experts say addiction triggers compounded by stay-at-home orders and a disruption of support networks are just two contributing factors.** <https://www.myhighplains.com/news/for-your-health/overdose-surge-mirrors-coronavirus-pandemic/> August 3, 2020.
- **Pandemic Clashes With Opioid Crisis.** <https://www.wpr.org/shows/pandemic-clashes-opioid-crisis> June 29, 2020
- **Opioid crisis getting worse during COVID-19 pandemic, medical professionals say.** (Madison) <https://www.nbc15.com/content/news/Opioid-crisis-getting-worse-during-COVID-19-pandemic-medical-professionals-say-569900351.html> April 23, 2020
- **Fentanyl overdose deaths on the rise in Milwaukee County.** <https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/fentanyl-overdose-deaths-on-the-rise-in-milwaukee-county> April 17, 2020
- **Public health alert issued in Dane County following suspected rise in opioid overdoses.** <https://www.channel3000.com/public-health-alert-issued-in-dane-county-following-suspected-rise-in-opioid-overdoses/> April 7, 2020

### 41. Wyoming

- **Meth Involved in Majority of Cheyenne Drug Cases in 2019.** <https://kgab.com/meth-involved-in-majority-of-cheyenne-drug-cases-in-2019/> August 4, 2020