

## California Opioid Safety Network December Digest

Greetings!

For the past few months you have been receiving monthly digests from Kelly Pfeifer of the California Health Care Foundation with content you are encouraged to share with your coalition members and communities: local, state, and national media coverage, updates that shine the spotlight on accomplishments, and a roundup of upcoming trainings, network resources, webinars, and other learning opportunities.

Moving forward, the Center for Health Leadership and Practice (CHLP), a program of the Public Health Institute, is the new network manager for the California Opioid Safety Network. CHLP will be producing and sending out these digests. Read below my signature for our first one. If you have any items you would like us to share, or if you have feedback on how we can make these monthly updates more useful, please email us at: [info@healthleadership.org](mailto:info@healthleadership.org).

And, please remember the deadline for the Accelerator Program application is Thursday, December 14 <https://healthleadership.ning.com/ca-opioid-safety-network>. Coalitions that also want a VISTA member placement must apply!

With your help, we look forward to continuing to turn the tide on the opioid epidemic!



Carmen R. Nevarez, MD, MPH  
Director, Center for Health Leadership and Practice  
Public Health Institute

### **News You Can Reuse**

There is little in the President's recent opioid report that addresses prevention, a missed opportunity to turn the tide on addiction.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/27/upshot/where-is-the-prevention-in-the-presidents-opioid-report.html>.

The Center for Public Democracy has convened a national "Opioid Network" with 45 member organizations to advocate for federal funding to address the opioid crisis.

<http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/360135-new-group-advocates-for-45b-to-fight-opioid-epidemic>.

Using virtual visits to treat addiction has been in practice in Indiana for nearly a year. NPR explores how telehealth in the state has addressed the need for more treatment services.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/11/24/565360136/telemedicine-for-addiction-treatment-picture-remains-fuzzy>

The Government Accountability Office released a report last week calling for Medicare to do more to identify elderly patients at risk of suffering harm from opioids.

<http://nationalpainreport.com/gao-wants-medicare-to-do-more-to-limit-opioids-8834873.html>

As safer prescribing guidelines go into effect in health care settings across the nation, patients accustomed to taking opioid pain medications continue to feel left behind. Alternative treatments and prevention can help curb demand for dangerous long-term use.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-11-21/millions-of-patients-face-pain-and-withdrawal-as-opioid-prescriptions-plummet>

### **Spotlight on Coalitions**

CHCF sponsored a meeting of rural coalitions in October to discuss MAT strategies in rural communities. Host clinic El Dorado Community Health Center provided an overview of its robust MAT in primary care program that sees 160 patients and has a 10-member team. Contact Gina Anderson [ganderson@edchc.org](mailto:ganderson@edchc.org) to learn more. The meeting also included discussion of Plumas County's new screening questions for those entering jail to identify those at risk of opioid addiction. Contact Stephanie Tanaka [stephanietanaka@countyofplumas.com](mailto:stephanietanaka@countyofplumas.com) for more information.

RxSafe Marin hosts regular community forums to discuss solutions and strategies to address opioid safety. In November, the coalition gathering focused on the effectiveness of the overdose antidote, Naloxone, which is now in all squad cars in the city of Marin. Resources from the forum are on Dropbox here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/usianeffklmfrvm/AADBUFjHptxJLKbn-bHhgLIha?dl=0>. The coalition's next forum on healthy pain management will be in March 2018.

In Shasta County, prescribing is down 15% over three years, but is still double the state average. County public health officer and NoRxAbuse coalition member, Dr. Andrew Deckart, points to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as a reason overdose deaths are so high in rural communities.

<http://www.krcrtv.com/news/local/northstate/a-community-addicted/opioid-crisis-doctor-explains-risk-factors-in-shasta-county/664388189>.

RxSafe Marin has also produced several powerful videos, including this one on their collective impact approach <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGyhnafhBMA> and My Rx Story (shot with an iPhone and a drone) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsHBZN0dYFc>.

## **Strategies for Opioid Safety**

CHCF hosted an opioid briefing in Sacramento last week featuring state leaders from CDPH, DHCS, and DOJ. The session provides an overview of current efforts statewide, and is a good primer for those wanting to catch up on who is doing what at the state level. Watch the recording here: <http://www.chcf.org/events/2017/briefing-californias-response-opioid>.

Opioid safety advocates from across the state met last month for the California Opioid Policy Summit hosted by San Diego's Prescription Drug Taskforce. Topics included increasing MAT access, Naloxone, and law enforcement, regional efforts to curb Fentanyl abuse, and regional breakout sessions to discuss localized strategies <https://www.sandiegorxabusetaaskforce.org>.

The CDC launched their national public education campaign this fall. Check out their videos, ads, radio spots and more, all available and customizable for local use <https://www.cdc.gov/rxawareness/index.html>. CDPH's public education campaign specifically for rural Northern California counties is in development and should launch this spring.

## **Upcoming Opportunities**

For those interested in applying for the California Opioid Safety Network's Accelerator Program, go to: <https://healthleadership.ning.com/ca-opioid-safety-network> to request an application. Applications are due Thursday, December 14.

\*\*\*\*\*

Carmen Rita Nevarez, MD, MPH  
Vice President for External Relations  
Director, Center for Health Leadership and Practice  
Public Health Institute  
555 12th Street, 10th Floor  
Oakland, CA 94607-4046  
Phone: 510.285.5594 (direct)  
Main: 510-285.5500  
Fax: 510-285-5501  
Email: [CRNevarez@healthleadership.org](mailto:CRNevarez@healthleadership.org)  
[www.healthleadership.org](http://www.healthleadership.org)

*"We're changing the way people think about health ...."*

\*\*\*\*\*