NATIONAL OPIOID EPIDEMIC

11.8 MILLION
Number of people age 12 or older who misused opioids in 2016
Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2018). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States

115 PER DAY
Approximate number of opioid overdose deaths that occur
Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse (2018) Opioid Overdose Crisis

10.2 MILLION
Approximate number of adults who have co-occurring mental health and addiction disorders

AACN'S ENGAGEMENT

100,000
Students and faculty reached

$20,000
Grants awarded to AACN students to research SUD

In 2015, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) joined with more than 40 healthcare provider groups to address the prescription drug abuse and heroin epidemic in the United States. AACN members and other stakeholders have been educated through webinars, social media channels, and other communications on opioid prescriber practices and other courses of action.

AACN, in collaboration with the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, supported student research at AACN member schools through their joint Blending Initiative. The grants are intended to support projects that contribute to the knowledge of Substance Use Disorders (SUD) and advance research, dissemination, and adoption of evidence-based SUD treatment.

On September 7, 2017, Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM) introduced the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act (H.R. 3692) to expand the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823 (g)(2)(G)). This would allow all Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to use their clinical training and expertise to provide care to those suffering from opioid addictions. Senators Ed Markey (D-MA), Rand Paul (R-KY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced Senate companion legislation (S. 2317) on January 17, 2018.

Like H.R. 3692/S. 2317, the "CARA 2.0 Act of 2018," amends the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA, Public Law 114-198) and would make permanent Section 303 of CARA, which permits Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants to prescribe buprenorphine as part of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). It also expands the definition of "provider" to include all four APRN roles, so that in addition to NPs, certified registered nurse anesthetists, certified nurse midwives, and clinical nurse specialists can treat using MAT. AACN supports this provision and the important work to advance CARA 2.0.

REQUEST: SUPPORT INCREASING ACCESS TO TREATMENT FOR OPIOID ABUSE