

AACN'S RESPONSE: THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

"Education is key...our schools of nursing are actively engaged in preparing a nursing workforce to be frontline leaders on the opioid epidemic."

-AACN Board Chair
Dr. Ann Cary

11.8 MILLION PEOPLE

age 12 or older misused
opioids in 2016

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration. (2018). Key Sub-
stance Use and Mental Health Indicators in
the United States.

115 DEATHS PER DAY

occur because of
opioid overdose

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse.
(2018). Opioid Overdose Crisis.

10.2 MILLION ADULTS

have co-occurring
mental health and
addiction disorders

Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness.
(2018). Mental health by the numbers.

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. As the severity of the crisis continues to rise, AACN remains a committed ally in combatting the epidemic by focusing on two primary policy issues: workforce development and access to Medication-Assisted Treatments (MAT). AACN is working to support our members (810 schools of nursing, over 500,000 students, and 47,000 faculty) to help end the opioid epidemic through the following actions.

SUPPORTED LEGISLATION

H.R. 5102/S. 2524, the Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act of 2018 would amend Title VII of the Public Health Service Act to authorize a loan repayment program for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment providers, including physicians, registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), social workers, and other behavioral health professionals. The House passed this bill on June 12. This legislation is under further consideration in the Senate.

H.R. 3692/S. 2317, the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act of 2018 would broaden the Controlled Substances Act to create a permanent solution so that APRNs, including nurse practitioners (NPs), certified nurse-midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists, can prescribe and refer for MATs to support patients struggling with addiction. An amended version of this legislation was included in **Sec. 303 of H.R. 6, Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act**. Sec. 303 of H.R. 6 would permanently authorize NPs and PAs to provide MAT and authorize clinical nurse specialists, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and certified nurse-midwives as qualified prescribers for five years. H.R. 6 is expected to be considered on the House floor in June.

EDUCATED SCHOOLS & STAKEHOLDERS

AACN has led the national effort to enhance the education of students in APRN programs on safe prescribing practices. Members have been educated through webinars, social media channels, other communications on opioid prescriber practices, and other engagement methods. AACN's "Academic Nursing Responds to the Opioid Epidemic" landing page includes resources and toolkits.



100,000 stakeholders

including students and faculty reached



\$20,000 in grants

awarded to AACN students to research SUD



200 Schools

pledged to teach CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain



4,000 participants

educated through webinars



526 messages

sent to Capitol Hill

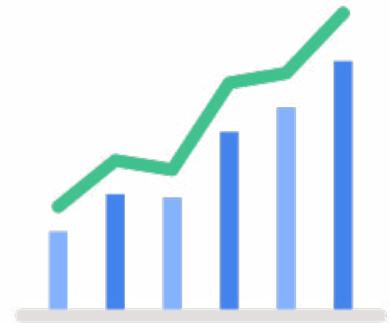
Find more information online at aacnnursing.org/policy-advocacy/opioids

PROGRESS TO DATE

- 100,000 stakeholders informed through AACN's Engagement Strategy.
- Approximately 200 member schools pledged to educate their students on the CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain.
- Educated 14,800 nursing students and faculty on opioid prescriber practices and MATs through webinars or conference presentations.
- 4,000 stakeholders educated through AACN webinars and joint webinars.
- Based on this work, *Modern Healthcare* featured an op-ed by AACN President and CEO Dr. Deborah Trautman.

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

- All nursing schools adopt enhanced curriculum to address the opioid epidemic.
- Over 120,000 stakeholders will be informed through AACN's Engagement Strategy.
- 600 letters will be sent to Capitol Hill from AACN stakeholders in support of legislation addressing the opioid epidemic.



PROVIDED COMMENTS

AACN provided public comments during the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force urging that HHS consider and advance all possible solutions to help fight the opioid crisis and voicing the association's strong support for H.R. 3692/S. 2317, the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act. (June 13, 2018)

AACN provided comments in response to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee's draft legislation, *The Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018*, addressing the need to incorporate all APRN roles and providers in the solution to the opioid crisis. (April 11, 2018)

AACN provided comments recommending the inclusion of all APRNs to prescribe MATs in response to *Hearing on the Opioid Crisis: Removing Barriers to Prevent And Treat Opioid Abuse and Dependence in Medicare* held by the House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Health. (February 20, 2018)

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

AACN, in collaboration with the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), has been allotted \$20,000 in grant funding to be awarded to students at an AACN member school. The NIDA Blending Initiative intends to support projects that contribute to the knowledge of SUD and advance research, dissemination, and adoption of evidence-based SUD treatment.