



POTENTIAL DANGERS OF PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATIONS

In Utah, the illegal use of prescription pain medications has reached epidemic proportions. Since 2000, the number of deaths due to prescription pain medication overdose has increased over 400%.² In fact, more deaths were associated with overdose than from car crashes.³ The most common prescription pain medications involved in these deaths are oxycodone, methadone, hydrocodone and fentanyl.⁴

Prescription pain medications cause more Utah deaths than all other illicit drugs combined.⁵

Currently, the number one growing concern in Utah is non-medical use of prescription pain medications, due to their easy availability. The most recent 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health reports an estimated 5.3 million persons used pain relievers non-medically in the surveyed month.⁶

The proper use, storage, and disposal of prescription pain medications can do much to correct this problem. For the safety of your family, neighbors, friends and environment, please use, store and dispose of your prescription pain medications “only as directed.”



RESOURCES FOR DRUG ABUSE

Utah has many treatment resources available for overcoming dependence and addiction to prescription pain medications. To be directed to local services or treatment centers, call 2-1-1.

WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL HELP

- If you or someone you know is experiencing unwanted side effects from taking prescription pain medication, contact the prescribing physician.
- Signs of an overdose can include slow, shallow breathing, clammy skin, and/or is unable to awaken. An antidote is available that can reverse the overdose.
- If you or someone you know is having difficulty breathing or may have overdosed, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222 or call 9-1-1 immediately.

To learn more about Utah’s prescription pain medication problem as well as access links to resources you can use to prevent abuse and treat addiction, visit UseOnlyAsDirected.org



REFERENCES

- ¹<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5906a1.htm>
- ²<http://health.utah.gov/uthealthnews/2010/20100428-DrugDeaths.html>
- ³http://health.utah.gov/opha/publications/hso/07Aug_uninskids.pdf. See page 3.
- ⁴<http://health.utah.gov/prescription/pdf/Utah%20Health%20Status%20Update%20final.pdf>
- ⁵<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/pdf/poison-issue-brief.pdf>
- ⁶<http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9ResultsP.pdf>. See page 14 of document (page 20 of PDF).

3 KEYS FOR SAFE USE OF PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATION



USE ONLY AS DIRECTED



UseOnlyAsDirected.org

SAFE USE

Prescription pain medications can be dangerous—even fatal—if used incorrectly. When you receive prescribed pain medications, be sure to speak with your healthcare provider and pharmacist about using them safely.



- Never take prescription pain medication that is not prescribed to you.
- Never take your prescription pain medications more often or in higher doses than prescribed.
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescription pain medications.
- Never share your prescription pain medications with anyone. Besides being dangerous, it is a felony.
- Taking prescription pain medications with other depressants such as anti-anxiety medications, sleep aids, or cold medicine can be dangerous.
- Properly dispose of all unused and expired prescription pain medications.
- Tell your healthcare provider about ALL medicines and supplements you take.

SAFE STORAGE



SAFE DISPOSAL

Do not flush medications down the toilet or drain. Scientific studies have shown that medications are present in small amounts in our lakes, rivers and ground water and may be bad for the environment.

Do your part to prevent poisonings, pollution and abuse. Clean out your medicine cabinet and take unused medications to collection bins located at police stations and sheriff's offices for safe and legal disposal. You cannot take medications back to your pharmacy. To find safe disposal sites and special medication collection events, visit: UseOnlyAsDirected.org and click on **Safe Disposal**.

If you cannot find a collection site or event in your community, follow these steps for safe disposal in your garbage:

1. Remove all personal identification from the bottles.
2. Crush and mix unused drugs with an undesirable substance such as coffee grounds, table scraps or dirt.
3. Place this mixture in a sealed container and put it in your trash can on the day of pick-up.



The majority of people who use prescription pain medications that are not prescribed to them report getting it from a family member or friend.¹ In fact, just by having prescription pain medications in your home you are at increased risk for theft.

- Store prescription pain medications out of reach of kids and visitors.
- Know where your prescription pain medications are at all times.
- Keep prescription pain medications in the original bottle with the label attached, and with the child-resistant cap secured.
- Keep track of how many prescription pain pills are in your bottle so you are immediately aware if any are missing.
- Dispose of all unused and expired prescription pain medications properly.



Use Only as Directed Prescription Drug Public Awareness Campaign



**USE ONLY AS
DIRECTED**

Safe USE - Safe STORAGE - Safe DISPOSAL

Ad Agency



FY 2011 Appropriation: \$250,000 JAG Grant
SPF Grant
FY 2012 Appropriation: \$250,000 JAG Grant

Website

<http://www.useonlyasdirected.org>

Billboards



TV

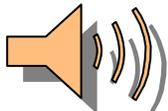


Two Face



Bear Trap

Radio



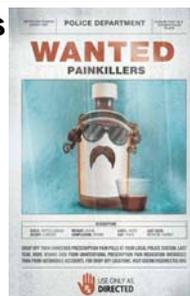
Badger
Keeping Track

Angie's Story



Pharmacy Stickers

Posters



Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Project Overview



Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Project (UPDCP)

National Threat

Pharmaceutical drug abuse is a significant national threat and growing trend. According to the Office of

"[Prescription drugs] account for the second most commonly abused category of drugs behind marijuana and well ahead of methamphetamine."

National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), youth drug abuse declined 24% from 2001 to 2007 with 860,000 fewer young people abusing drugs.¹ That's the good news. The bad news is that abuse of prescription drugs is an

emerging threat. They account for the second most commonly abused category of drugs behind marijuana and well ahead of methamphetamine.¹ Non-medical use of prescription pain relievers was the abuse drug category with the largest number of new abusers (2.2 million).²

"Every day 2,500 youth ages 12-17 abuse prescription drugs for the first time."

According to the ONDCP Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee, every day 2,500 youth, ages 12-17 abuse prescription drugs for the first time.³ The committee also reports that substance abuse treatment

"The non-medical use of pharmaceuticals accounts for nearly a half-million medical emergency department visits annually."

admissions for prescription painkillers increased 300% in just ten years.³ Non-medical use of pharmaceuticals accounts for nearly a half-million medical emergency department visits annually.⁴ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University conducted a study in 2006 showing 2.2 million teens (between the ages of 12-17) admitted abusing a prescription drug during the past year.⁵

Utah Threat

"Utah is fourth in the nation for non-medical use of pain relievers."

Utah is fourth in the nation for non-medical use of pain relievers.⁸ For 26 year olds and older, Utah has the second highest reported rates in the nation

of using pain relievers for non-medical use.⁸ Of those using pain relievers for non-medical purposes, 75% are over 25 years old.⁸ The Utah Department of Health reports 317 people died from pharmaceutical drug overdose in 2007.⁶ That number is twice as high as overdose deaths caused from all illicit drugs in Utah that year.

According to a 2006 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study, 6.21% of Utahans 12 years of age or older report using pain relievers for non-medical use in the past year.⁸ According to the Utah Department of Human Services 2007 SHARP Survey, 16% of Utah youth between the ages of 12-17 reported abusing pharmaceutical drugs within the last 30 days.⁷

"[In Utah] 317 people died from pharmaceutical drug overdose in 2007."

Utah has a significant pharmaceutical drug abuse problem that must be addressed in a multi-disciplinary, coordinated statewide effort. Why is there an increase in abuse related to prescription drugs? The answer is related to availability, perception of risk and public attitude.

Availability

Prescription drugs can be obtained by simply going into the unsecured medicine cabinet in most homes. Once an individual decides to abuse pharmaceutical drugs, he or she can obtain them through a number of sources including family and friends. Sometimes it's as easy as using a restroom in another person's home, where most prescription drugs are stored unsecured. At "pharm parties," teenagers bring a variety of drugs from home and consolidate them for arbitrary use at the party. "Doctor shopping" is another relatively easy means of obtaining pharmaceutical drugs. Other methods include altered or forged prescriptions, stolen prescriptions, computer generated prescriptions, pharmaceutical burglaries and robberies, internet trafficking, diversion by medical personnel, pharmacists or their employees, and theft from pharmaceutical companies or their distributors. Lastly, pharmaceutical drugs can be obtained on the street from drug dealers who tend to specialize in these types of controlled substances.

Perception of Risk

There is a perception among the public and pharmaceutical drug abusers that the risks associated with prescription drugs are significantly less than with illegal drugs. Many users and non-users feel that, because the drugs are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor, they are relatively harmless and safe. This perception of risk

“Many users and non-users feel that because [pharmaceutical] drugs are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor, they are relatively harmless and safe. This perception of risk includes both adverse physical and psychological harm for use.”

includes both adverse physical and psychological harm from use. The users also feel that since pharmaceutical drugs are “legal”, the risk of getting in trouble with authorities is significantly less than with illegal drugs.

Public Attitude

The public is generally well aware of the dangers from using drugs such as marijuana, methamphetamines and cocaine. Although proponents of drug legalization attempt to change public attitude, polls and surveys show that the majority of the American public is against the use of illegal drugs. In those areas of our society where the public attitude is more favorable to illegal drug use, there is often a corresponding greater use pattern. Those societal subsets could be families or neighborhoods. In the case of pharmaceutical drugs, which are in almost every home for medical reasons, the public is more accepting. This more tolerant attitude tends to lead to greater non-medicinal use of prescription drugs.

“...polls and surveys show that the majority of the American public is against the use of illegal drugs.”

Strategy

UPDCP will use public and private multi-disciplinary resources to address the pharmaceutical drug abuse problem in Utah. This program will remain fluid and sufficiently flexible in adapting to change and assessments. The program will continue to monitor the threat, adjust the strategy and assess the results, both from a criminal justice and public awareness perspective.

“UPDCP will use public and private multi-disciplinary resources to address the pharmaceutical drug abuse problem in Utah.”

The goal of the Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Project is to reduce the abuse of prescription drugs by accomplishing the following objectives:

- **Reduce** availability for abuse
- **Increase** the awareness of risk to include the physical and psychological harmful effects as well as legal sanctions; and
- **Decrease** tolerance of the non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs.

The criminal justice component will target the sources for pharmaceutical drug diversion with the goal of disrupting or dismantling as many of these sources as possible. The public awareness and education component will educate the public and initiate community change through environmental strategies and policy.

¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy Press Release March 1, 2008

² National Survey of Drug Use and Health by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services September 2006

³ Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee (PAC) Executive Summary 2007

⁴ The New DAWN Report June 23, 2006

⁵ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, “You’ve Got Drugs!”, Prescription Drug Pushers on the Internet, July 2008

⁶ Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, *Prescription Drugs*, September 2008

⁷ Utah Department of Human Services, 2007 SHARP Survey, October 5, 2007

⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services “State Estimates of Substance Use” from the 2005-2006 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health

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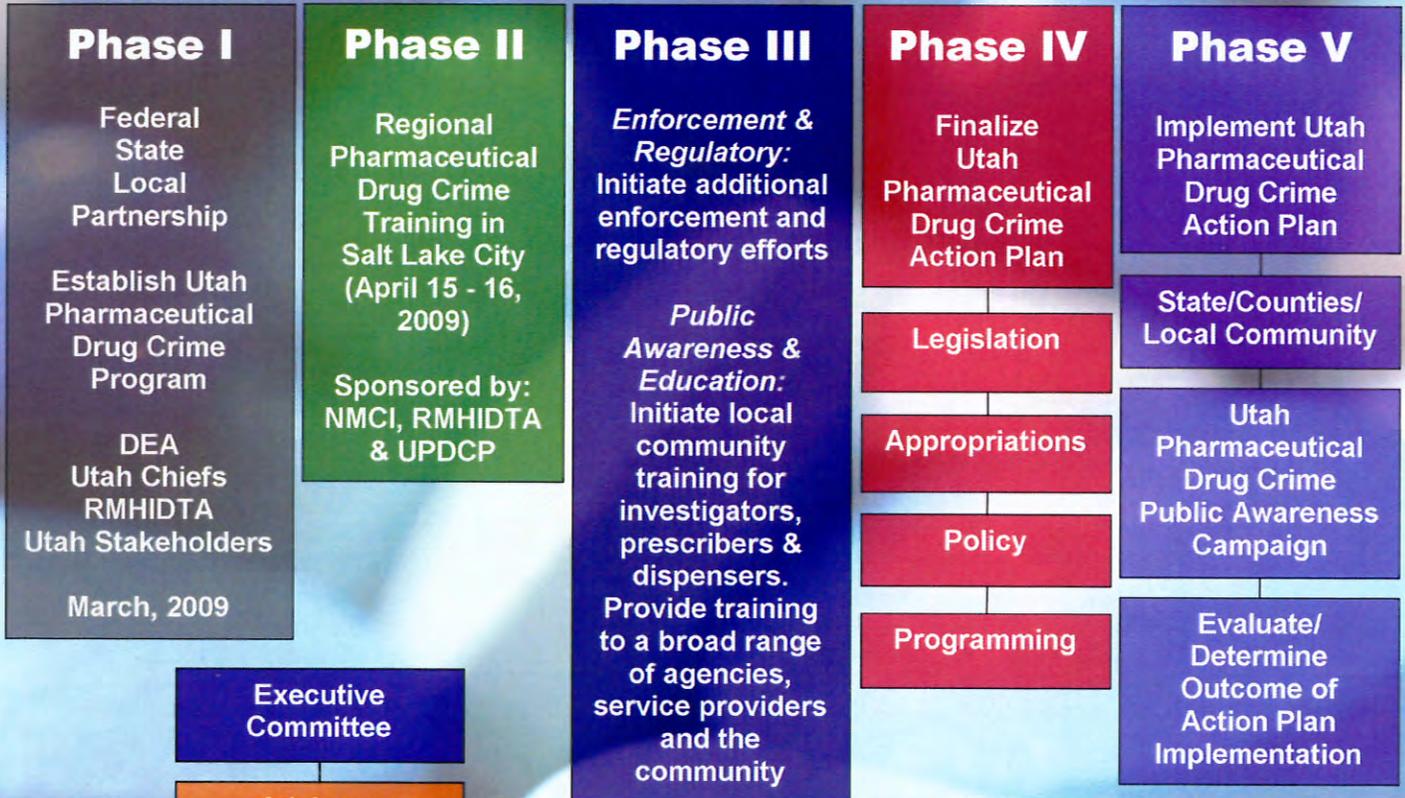
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Pharmaceutical Phase Plan



Executive Committee

Advisory Committee

Enforcement & Regulatory Component

Public Awareness & Education Component

Advisory Committee and Executive Committee provide recommendations. Enforcement/Regulatory & Public Awareness/Education Components conduct project activities.



Proposed Components of Comprehensive Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Action Plan

- Establish Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Enforcement Task Force/Prosecutor at DEA
- Provide training for investigators, prosecutors, dispensers and prescribers
- Conduct the Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Public Awareness Campaign
- Provide education presentations for community groups and private/public agencies
- Expand prescription 'drop box' take back program in Utah
- Enhance Utah's Controlled Substance Database
- Implement additional fields in agency databases to track prescription drugs

Pharmaceutical Focus Areas

Executive Committee

Advisory Committee

Enforcement & Prosecution Component

Enforcement

- Target the sources for pharmaceutical drug diversion - disrupt and dismantle
- Coordinate and facilitate enforcement activity & information exchange with bordering states
- Establish a de-confliction system for pharmaceutical investigations
- Interact with treatment to direct people seeking help & exchange information on trends
- Develop P.O.S.T approved Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Investigation Course with a train the trainer segment enabling attendees to train personnel in their jurisdictions

Prosecution

- Cross designate prosecutor to prosecute cases in state or federal court
- Provide training to investigators and prosecutors statewide on pharmaceutical drug crimes
- Assignment of legal expert to be available to provide advice to local prosecutors, officers and task force members
- Develop a one-hour presentation to be offered at a SWAP Conference
- Develop a four-hour Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Course to train county prosecutors

Public Awareness & Training Component

Public Awareness

- Form the "Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Public Awareness Campaign"
- Increase the public's awareness of the harmful risks and modify the perception that the abuse of pharmaceuticals is relatively harmless
- Publish a quarterly newsletter to include trends, recap on completed investigations, statistics and program activities
- Establish the UPDCP website
- Engage Native American and faith-based communities in efforts
 - Provide articles to professional magazines and publications
 - Work with local media to disseminate information to the public

Education

- Conduct training to local communities for investigators, dispensers and prescribers
- Link with workers compensation and safety groups to provide education
- Facilitate youth and parents to receive pharmaceutical prevention curriculum
- Provide basic information training to a wide variety of community groups, public and private agencies with train the trainers segment to roll out training and materials to local communities
- Provide education presentations at local and state conferences

Environmental Strategies

- Utilize public and private resources to address the pharmaceutical drug abuse problem in Utah
- Reduce the availability of prescriptions for abuse
- Increase the perception of risk to include the physical & psychological harm and legal sanctions
- Change the public's more tolerant attitude toward being less tolerant of the non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs
- Change policy to reduce pharmaceutical drug crime
- Expand prescription take-back programs in Utah
- Engage workers compensation safety group, faith-based organizations and Tribal governments to develop specific initiatives to respond to prescription drug abuse
- Work with already existing local state and federal initiatives
- Increase effective communication and sharing of information between law enforcement and treatment providers

Regulations and Laws

Subcommittee established to explore and research regulations and laws that will reduce the illicit use of pharmaceuticals and associated crime