Illinois Policy Responses to the Opioid Epidemic

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It is an epidemic..
Opioid Crisis in Illinois

THE OPIOID CRISIS

60%
60.9% of all U.S. drug overdose deaths involved opioids (2014)

3X
Nationally, drug overdose deaths have nearly tripled since 1999

2,278
In 2016, there were more than 2,000 drug overdose deaths in Illinois

44%
Illinois’ drug overdose deaths increased more than 40% since 2013

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health
Illinois Substance Use Disorder Treatment System

- Largely funded through grants
- Cuts of 25% or more over the last decade
- Not integrated
- Not evidence-based
- Limited Medicaid funding
What do you do?
Establish a Task Force!
Illinois Young Adult Heroin Use Task Force

- Established by legislation
- Initial focus on heroin use in high schools
- Membership mostly state legislators
- Hearings focused on all aspects of crisis
- Hearings held all over the state
- Effectively built consensus for the path forward – mostly a political process
- Legislation based on recommendations introduced the following year
Heroin Crisis Act

Expanded access to treatment

- Required Medicaid coverage of all medication assisted treatments (MAT)
- Eliminated prior authorizations and utilization controls on MAT
- Required parity for MAT prescriptions and in-patient treatment
- Required private insurance to publish its SUD benefit policies
Heroin Crisis Act

**Overdose prevention**

- Medicaid coverage for Naloxone
- Pharmacist-initiated Naloxone dispensing
- Prescriptions allowed for friends and family
- Protects health professionals from criminal liability and lay people from civil liability
- Requires fire fighters, police, first responders, and school personnel to be trained in Naloxone and to have access to it
Heroin Crisis Act

Other provisions
■ Expanded Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
■ Expanded Medication Take Back Program
■ New documentation requirements for Schedule II narcotics
■ Expanded Drug Court
■ Establishes public awareness and junior and senior high school education programs
Heroin Crisis Act: PASSED

- Passed unanimously out of the House
- Overturned an amendatory veto
- Signed into law during unprecedented budget crisis
Implementation Challenges

- Inconsistent managed care implementation
- Slow training for providers and pharmacists
- Difficulty enforcing parity requirements
- Needed culture change with providers and criminal justice system