



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Fast Facts:
2015 Legislative Session

Fighting the spread of opioids

Minnesota is seeing a worrisome rise in the use of prescription opioid pain medication and heroin. The consequences of ample availability of opioids include increased incidents in opioid addiction, prenatal exposure resulting in babies being born with adverse health effects, and overdose and deaths resulting from opioid overdoses.

Over the past two decades, deaths from drug overdose have been rising steadily and are the leading cause of injury death in Minnesota as well as the nation. Opioids can be an effective tool for pain management but can also result in physical dependency in some patients. While Minnesota's overdose rate is lower in comparison to other states, overdose deaths have more than tripled since 2000.

In the 2015 legislative session the governor and Legislature took action to reduce the spread of opiates by enhancing care for pregnant women addicted to opiates, and by promoting participation by prescribers and pharmacists in the Prescription Monitoring Program and funding training for physicians on addiction, prescribing opiates and alternative approaches to pain management. Minnesota is also expanding the state's capacity so that a greater number of Minnesotans on public programs needing to be monitored for abusive prescription behavior can be included in the monitoring program.

2015 legislation:

Integrated care for high-risk pregnant woman: Funding for this program will provide targeted, integrated services for pregnant mothers at high risk for poor birth outcomes due to drug use. The funding will help improve outcomes for infants born to opioid exposed mothers, and result in a 20 percent reduction in average hospital length of stay due to neonatal exposure. **FY 16/17: \$271,000 (savings of \$1.3 million in FY 18/19)**

Opioid prescribing improvement and monitoring program: Approximately 19,000 Minnesotans are regularly prescribed opiates in Minnesota's publicly funded health care programs. Funding for this program will help ensure they get the proper care they need to manage their pain and at the same time decrease the overprescribing of opioids. **FY 16/17: \$33,000 (savings of \$42,000 in FY 18/19)**

Expands Minnesota Restricted Recipient Program (MRRP): The Minnesota Restricted Recipient Program, which identifies recipients who have misused or abused their health care plan services and restricts them to designated providers, will add three new staff. The program improves safety and quality of care as well as reduces costs for people enrolled in MA and MinnesotaCare. **FY 16/17: savings of \$519,000**

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