

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON HEROIN, OPIOIDS, AND PAIN EFFORTS (HOPE COMMITTEE)

INDIAN HEALTH CARE: ENSURING A COORDINATED, HOLISTIC RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID AND HEROIN EPIDEMIC

**IN THIS ISSUE:
PEER SPECIALISTS SUPPORTING RECOVERY, DEA DRUG TAKE BACK DAY &
NEW ECHO SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHARMACIST ROLES
WITHIN THE TEAM TREATING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**

Peer Specialists Supporting Recovery through Community Connection & Outreach

A recently published [study](#) suggests opportunities to improve access to Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) for American Indians / Alaska Natives and to recognize treatment challenges related to poly-substance use (particularly with methamphetamine co-use). Leveraging paraprofessionals and peer support specialists in community settings is a promising practice to improve community wellness and [behavioral health equity](#). Peer specialists provide outreach services in the community and serve as an extension of medical services. Peer recovery support services are typically delivered by persons with a lived experience of substance use and recovery. Creating relationships and connections with peers help persons with substance use disorders begin their journey to recovery. Peer services extend the reach of treatment beyond clinical settings to support and sustain recovery. [SAMHSA](#) has developed recovery support tools and resources to assist communities with establishing and supporting peer services.

Many tribal communities have successfully created community outreach programs to promote community wellness. Peer specialists have developed new referral patterns that improve care coordination between transitions of care, improved outcomes following overdose resuscitation (including withdrawal management), and have supported people on their path of recovery and while waiting for chemical dependency assessment and treatment.

There are a variety of [supports](#) for peer specialists. These can range from [training](#) and certification to expanded support networks such as [Sober Squad](#). The [2020 National Drug Control Strategy](#) includes peer recovery support services as a key strategy. The IHS is actively working to evaluate opportunities to expand access to peer recovery services.

- To ensure access to MAT, IHS released the [Special General Memorandum 2019-01](#). All IHS federal facilities will identify OUD treatment resources in their local areas and create an action plan to provide or coordinate access to MAT, increasing access to culturally appropriate prevention, treatment and recovery support services.
- Read how the opioid epidemic is impacted by [COVID-19](#).



Southern Plains Tribal Health Board's Peer Support [Toolkit](#)

For timely information regarding the IHS' response to the opioid epidemic, subscribe to HOPE's listserv [here](#) & search "Heroin, Opioids, and Pain Efforts"

For more information, visit:
www.ihs.gov/opioids &
www.ihs.gov/painmanagement

DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day: April 24th

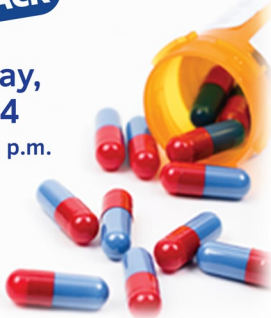
The 19th Annual Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Prescription Drug [Take Back Day](#) is scheduled for Saturday, April 24th. This national, DEA sponsored event is held twice a year on the last Saturday of April and October and addresses an ongoing public safety and public health issue. According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.7 million people misused prescription pain relievers, 4.9 million people misused prescription stimulants, and 5.9 million people misused prescription tranquilizers or sedatives in 2019. The survey also showed the majority of misused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet.

The DEA's [Take Back Day](#) events provide an opportunity for Americans to prevent drug addiction and overdose deaths. The nation-wide opioid epidemic has, in some way, impacted every life in the United States. Reducing prescription drug abuse starts with appropriate medication disposal, which ensures harmful substances cannot fall into the hands of those who struggle with opioid use disorder.

DEA NATIONAL
TAKEBACK

**Saturday,
April 24**

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.



Additional Resources:

- [Drug Database](#): Learn about illegal and legal drugs and their effects on a person's body and brain.
- [Unused Medication](#): Represents a public safety issue; proper disposal can save lives and protect the environment.
- [Partnership Toolbox](#): Download promotional material to promote Drug Take Back Day.
- [Year-Round Drug Disposal](#): Did you miss the DEA's Drug Take Back Day? Find an authorized collector near you.
- Read more about medication [disposal](#).

Advancing Pharmacist Roles in Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Teams

The Indian Health Service and Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board are excited to announce the launch of the [Advancing Pharmacist Roles in Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Treatment and Recovery Teams](#) ECHO. The pharmacist-focused ECHO began on April 6th and will continue with bi-monthly sessions on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month.

The ECHO is focused on equipping pharmacists, pharmacy staff, and other healthcare professionals with the necessary tools to effectively assume a critical role in SUD prevention, treatment and recovery, as well as play an active role on the team working to provide an integrated, holistic approach to SUD treatment. Sessions will include didactic presentations, patient and systems-based case presentations and discussions, and expert guidance from a variety of disciplines.

- Visit HOPE Committee's Training Opportunities [webpage](#) for details.
- Sign up [today!](#)

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Course Summer of 2021

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importance of [naloxone](#)
and what you can do to
[champion naloxone](#)
education in your area!

Upcoming Pharmacist ECHO:

May 4th, 1200 CST

[Additional Pain &
OUD ECHOs](#)