

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

## ***Indian Health Care: Ensuring a Coordinated, Holistic Response to the Opioid and Heroin Epidemic***

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## **October Declared National Substance Abuse Prevention Month**

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, The U.S. President proclaimed October 2018 as National Substance Abuse Prevention Month. This designation was made to recognize the importance of preventing substance abuse & ending the opioid epidemic by raising awareness about the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs, which include prescription opioid medications and their high potential for addiction.

The impact of the opioid crisis on American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) is immense. The CDC reported that AI/AN had the highest drug overdose death rates in 2015 and the largest percentage increase in the number of deaths over time from 1999-2015 compared to other racial and ethnic groups. Tribal communities have shared success stories surrounding incorporating culture in prevention and healing, as well as holistic approaches to recovery. There are remaining challenges and opportunities to work together to expand access to treatment, to support long-term recovery, and to enhance prevention efforts.

SAMHSA implemented a [Strategic Prevention Framework](#) (SPF), which is a comprehensive guide to plan, implement and evaluate prevention practices and programs. The five steps and two guiding principles of the SPF offer prevention professionals a comprehensive process for addressing the substance misuse and related behavioral health problems facing their communities. The SPF begins with a clear understanding of community needs and involves community members in all stages of the planning process. In collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SAMHSA created a [Focus on Prevention: Strategies and Programs to Prevent Substance Use](#) publication to be used with the evidence-based SPF model in mind. This publication provides tools to serve as building blocks as prevention activities are created, organized and executed.

IHS has a variety of available resources, clinical guidelines & best practices available on their [pain management](#) and [opioids](#) website which includes a specific section geared directly at [prevention](#).

### **HOPE Listserv**

Subscribe to the HOPE Listserv to receive timely announcements and newsletter releases, go [here](#) and search "IHS National Committee on Heroin, Opioids, and Pain Efforts"

## **DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Day:** **Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> 2018**



The 16th Annual Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Prescription Drug Take Back Day is scheduled to be held on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. The event is held twice a year on the last Saturday of April and October.

According to the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 6.2 million Americans misused controlled prescription drugs. The majority of misused prescription drugs are obtained from the kitchen, bedroom or medicine cabinet of a family, friend or neighbor. The DEA's Prescription Drug Take Back Day is an opportunity for Americans to help prevent drug addiction & overdose deaths and to raise awareness about the dangers of opioid misuse through proper medication disposal.

Since these events started in 2010, the DEA has collected & incinerated over 4,982 tons of unwanted, unused and potentially dangerous medication. The most recent event, held in April 2018, totaled over 4,600 law enforcement participants and 5,842 collection sites across the country which collected 949,046 pounds of prescriptions drugs. 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, a life-threatening disease that millions of Americans suffer from.

The IHS National [HOPE Committee](#) aims to reduce overdose deaths from heroin and prescription opioid misuse. Take back programs for medication disposal are a safe, responsible way to remove expired, unwanted, or unused medicines from one's possession or home and reduce the chance that others may find and intentionally use or accidentally take the unused medicine. It is important for both patients & medical providers to dispose of unused medications in a way that keeps these substances out of the environment and prevents others from harm. To review multiple resources and possibilities for proper drug disposal, visit HOPE's medication disposal [website](#).

A "[Partnership Toolbox](#)" was created and houses downloadable posters, pamphlets & other materials to promote Prescription Drug Take Back Day. For more information or to identify a collection site near you, visit their [website](#). If you missed October's DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Day, use the DEA's locator tool to find a [year-round drug disposal site](#) near you.

## **Facing Addiction in America:** **The Surgeon General's Spotlight on Opioids**



The United States Surgeon General provides Americans with the best scientific information available on how to improve health and reduce the risk of illness and injury. In 2016, the 1<sup>st</sup> Surgeon General's [Report](#) on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health was released. This report was created because of the important health and social problems associated with alcohol & drug misuse in America. Since the release, there has been a multitude of other resources published:

- [Spotlight on Opioids](#) assembles opioid-related information from the Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, & Health into one document to better inform the general public, especially family and friends of people at a high risk of opioid overdose, opioid misuse, and/or opioid use disorder
- [Naloxone Advisory](#) - Expanding the awareness and availability of this medication is a key part of the public health response to the opioid epidemic
- [Federal Resources](#) & [Supplementary Materials](#) are also available online
- Use the SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment [Locator Tool](#) to find services near you!

For more information, visit the U.S. Surgeon General [Website](#).

