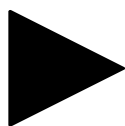




Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council Continues Discussion on Alabama's Opioid Epidemic

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For months, the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council have discussed how to combat a problem that's sweeping the nation.

"This is one of those problems that bleeds over into patient care, into law enforcement, into every aspect of our community life," says Lynn Beshear, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Public Health.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015 opioids were a factor in more than 700 deaths in Alabama.

"It was not an overnight situation that got us here. It's not going to be an overnight fix but I believe that the governor has taken a strong step forward in creating this council," says Beshear.

At Tuesday's meeting, members shared a number of recommendations, like providing medication in the form of a shot people can take called Vivitrol for people moving towards recovery.

“One of the barriers of course to a medication of that nature is the cost of it. It’s a thousand dollars a shot and you have that every month,” says Beshear.

Lynn Beshear of the Alabama Department of Mental Health says that’s why it’s important gain partnerships with pharmaceutical companies to make medications like Vivitrol more affordable.

“Our work is not done, there will still be much to come when it comes to implementing these recommendations as well as the work of the community-to continue to come up with suggestions about how to address where we are going forward,” says Attorney General Steve Marshall.

“Public education and collaboration is at the heart of it. There is a lot we need to do,” says Beshear.

Tuesday, was the third time that the council met together. Officials say the council plans to present a final report to Governor Kay Ivey this month.

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