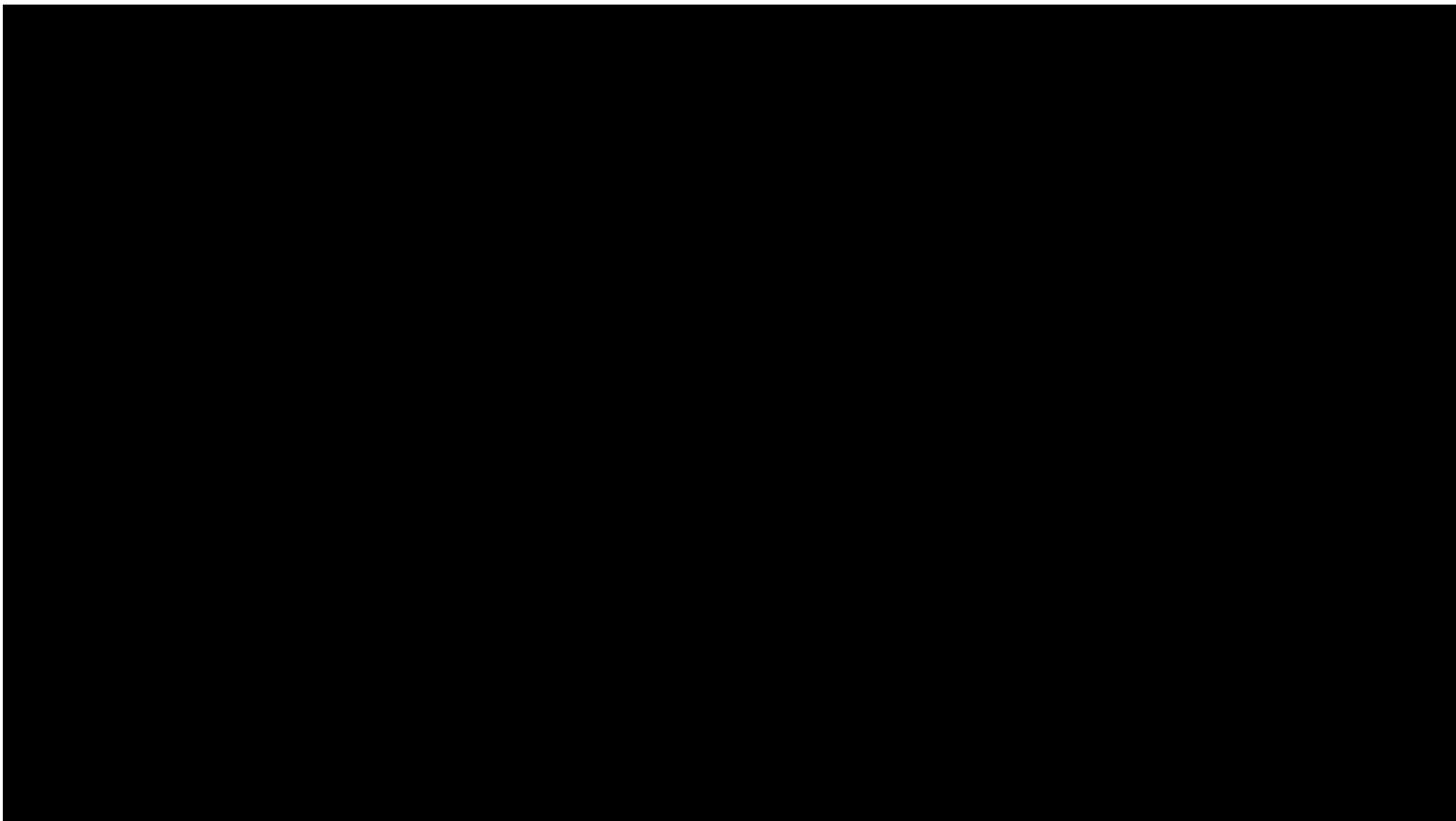




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Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council report released



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WVTM 13 Digital

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council released its report Wednesday detailing a plan to address opioid abuse in the state.

Here's what the council aims to do:



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PREVENTION

- Improve and modernize the Alabama Prescription Drug Monitoring Program so that it will be more user-friendly, and more prescribers will participate and be better informed; the Governor is requested to support a legislative appropriation of \$1.1 million to the Alabama Department of Public Health for this;
- Strengthen prescription data and research capabilities and create a unique identifier for each individual patient;
- Promote efforts to educate current and future prescribers, better implement current guidelines, adopt guidelines specific to opioid prescribing and impose mandatory opioid prescribing education;
- Create a website and messaging campaign to reduce the stigma of opioid addiction; and implement an outreach program to teach young people the dangers and to avoid opioids;
- Create a website and social media campaign to motivate opioid abusers to seek help and to effectively connect them and family members with ways to get help;
- Create a partnership for the Alabama Department of Mental Health to provide training about addiction to law enforcement agencies and the judiciary.

INTERVENTION

- Advocate legislation in the 2018 session to specifically prohibit trafficking in fentanyl and carfentanyl, which is particularly important because vastly smaller amounts of these than other opioids can be

deadly; for example, a lethal dose of fentanyl is 1000 times less than that of heroin, and the threshold amounts for the crimes of trafficking in fentanyl and carfentanil would better be measured in micrograms;

- As overdoses are 50 times greater for those leaving incarceration or other enforced abstinence, establish a process for the Department of Mental Health to reduce the stigma of medication assisted treatment, and begin a pilot program by the Department of Corrections in partnership with the Board of Pardons and Paroles to use naloxone, counseling and life skills to help released inmates remain drug free.

TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

- Promote adequate funding for treatment services and recovery support;
- Establish collaboration between the Department of Mental Health and recovery support providers to increase access;
- Support creating two addiction medicine fellowships to train Alabama physicians to recognize and treat substance abuse;
- Expand access and target effective treatment and prevention programs to areas where there is greater need;
- Improve education of professionals through continuing education for licensing and expand postsecondary and graduate curriculums.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

- Increase access to naloxone and maintain a list of participating pharmacies;
- Prioritize naloxone to law enforcement and for distribution in areas of greatest need;
- Provide naloxone training for first-responders;
- Encourage prescribing naloxone for high-risk patients;
- Have a Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America program in each judicial circuit and work toward having them at municipal levels;
- Engage employers, businesses, higher education and private-sector in a network to get resources into communities;
- Encourage having a Stepping Up Initiative in each county to work with the criminal justice system regarding incarceration of those with mental health problems;
- Develop ways to provide service to veterans regarding opioid issues.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

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