

Opioid Epidemic in America

This epidemic is the largest in US history. More people have died from an overdose than at the peak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This is a complex problem with no clear solution in sight. This leaves room for social innovation.

Causes



Addictive Nature & Mental Health

Genetic disposition for addiction and existing mental illness are leading factors that cause addiction



Over Prescribing & Accessibility

Over prescription allowed addictive opioids to be distributed to scores of patients. Easy accessibility encouraged sharing and selling of drugs



Experimenting & Peer Pressure

Easy access encouraged experimenting with opioids. This happens mainly with younger adults. Being in a culture of drug users encourages drug abuse

Widespread Effects



42,249 opioids related **Deaths** in 2016

\$504 Billion

in healthcare and premature fatality costs in 2015



\$24,000
Cost of incarceration per individual



\$4,700
Cost of treatment per individual

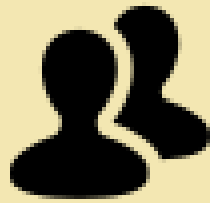
\$10 Billion/year estimated worth of U.S. opioid painkiller market



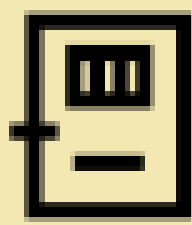
Current Solutions



Needle Exchange



Residential Rehabilitation



Jail



Good Samaritan Laws



Education & Counseling



Improved Pain Management



Naloxone Accessibility



Medically Managed Withdrawal

Solution Gaps



At Home Patient Monitoring

Regulated opioid use is safer than the alternative. Work in this area would reduce the easy of access to prescription medication by persons other than the patient



Therapy & Pain Management

Pain management can be changed to not include opioid use. New pain management plans could include new medications, a holistic approach, or other new therapy approaches.



Prescriber Training and Consultation

Prescribers need to be trained in the practice of safe prescribing and monitoring of their patients' pain management plan.



Addiction Stigma

Public opinion of drug addiction can be harsh. Changing public opinion would allow more resources to be allocated to treating this epidemic.