

OPIOIDS

Pennsylvania's #1 public health and public safety crisis

Josh Shapiro, Attorney General

By now, we all know the toll that the heroin and opioid epidemic is taking on our communities. This epidemic is our greatest public health and public safety challenge and my top priority as the chief law enforcement officer in Pennsylvania. As I travel across our Commonwealth, I see the toll that this crisis is taking on our communities. The epidemic shows no signs of slowing down, and we must do everything we can to stop it.



2017 ENFORCEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

To combat this epidemic, we must stem the tide of deadly drugs flowing into our communities from dangerous drug dealers. Heroin, fentanyl, and carfentanil are among the deadliest street drugs our communities have ever seen. Stopping these dealers is vital. In 2017, the Office of Attorney General made dramatic improvements in our drug law enforcement efforts. Here are some key highlights:

1,779

a rate of nearly 5 arrests per day

TOTAL DRUG DEALER ARREST

That's a 19% increase over 2016.



Example: In April 2017, OAG shut down a major heroin pipeline running from New York City through Altoona and York that sold over \$5 million in heroin. Charges were brought against 15 people.

OAG has charged 10 dangerous dealers with Drug Delivery Resulting in Death, a first-degree felony



72%

MORE

DIVERSION ARRESTS

216 arrests of doctors, pharmacists, and others who divert prescription drugs to the black market

Example: In June 2017, OAG brought charges against 13 individuals affiliated with a prescription drug ring that illegally wrote prescriptions for Oxycodone and then the drugs illegally in the Lehigh Valley.

PREVENTION EFFORTS

As crucial as our law enforcement operations are, I know we cannot arrest our way out of this crisis, because drug addiction is a disease, not a crime. The best way to fight the crisis is to prevent people from becoming addicted in the first place. OAG has been on the forefront of these prevention efforts.

- Unused, unwanted medication laying around our medicine cabinets presents a tremendous danger to our friends and loved ones. That's why OAG worked with the National Guard to collect and destroy over 43 tons of unused and unwanted prescription drugs from drop boxes across the Commonwealth, a 65 percent increase from 2016.
- Not everyone has convenient access to a drop box; that's why OAG distributed 300,000 safe drug disposal bags to 17 counties to help people destroy unwanted medications in their own home. These bags can eliminate 1.35 million pills from our communities.
- OAG's Office of Public Engagement regularly presents to schools and community groups about the dangers of heroin and opioids. By educating people at a young age, we can help them avoid addiction in the first place. We connected face-to-face with over 19,000 Pennsylvanians last year.

MULTISTATE OPIOID LITIGATION

Opioid manufacturers and distributors have been key players in the rise of opioid prescribing, use, and addiction. Despite only having 5 percent of the world's population, America consumes over 80 percent of the world's opioids. Sales of prescription opioids nearly quadrupled from 1999 to 2014, despite Americans reporting no increase in pain levels.

If these manufacturers and distributors deliberately caused an increase in the prescribing of these highly-addictive, dangerous drugs by false or misleading businesses practices, they must be held accountable. That's why I am a leader on a 41-state investigation into 5 opioid manufacturers and 3 drug distributors into what role their actions played in this crisis. This investigation is ongoing, but I will not hesitate to bring anyone to justice who profited off the pain, addiction, and death of Pennsylvanians.



OAG'S PLAN FOR 2018

While my office made tremendous strides in 2017, there is still much more work to be done. Preliminary data indicates that 2017 was even worse in terms of fatal overdoses in Pennsylvania. Redoubling our efforts is the only option. In 2018, OAG plans to:

- Increase our drug law enforcement efforts. OAG will put even more resources towards drug enforcement in 2018 to get more dangerous drugs and dealers off our streets.
- Improve our existing efforts through increased training to make our operations more effective at stopping high-level dealers.
- Redeploying existing resources. I am constantly reviewing our operations to ensure that we get maximum effectiveness for our investments. For example, I am redeploying what was known as the Mobile Street Crimes unit as the new Strategic Response Teams. These teams will be regionally-based and help local law enforcement handle emerging, high-value cases in their areas.
- Increase collaboration with local law enforcement. Collaboration is crucial to battling this crisis, because no one agency can do this alone. To improve collaboration, OAG will:
 - Implement a new service to assist local law enforcement with fatal drug overdose investigations to help target individuals who should be charged with Drug Delivery Resulting in Death
 - Provide support in collection and testing of potentially-fatal substances, like fentanyl
 - Develop a statewide comprehensive plan to address the crisis by bringing law enforcement leaders from across the Commonwealth together.
- Help increase treatment availability. OAG plans to pursue a number of innovative, law enforcement-led approaches to help more people who are suffering from addiction receive the treatment they need.
- Increase our public education efforts through OAG's Office of Public Engagement. This includes launching a new website with improved resources to help all Pennsylvanians understand the dangers of opioids and how to get help if they need it.



JOSH SHAPIRO
Attorney General



PAAttorneyGen



PAAttorneyGen

www.attorneygeneral.gov

717-787-3391