

HEALTH UPDATE



TO: Physicians and other Health Care Providers

Please distribute a copy of this information to each provider in your organization.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to the office of:

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Alert categories:
Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.

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**HEALTH
UPDATE**
July 22, 2019

Opportunity to participate in Washington Overdose Notification System



Opportunity

Southwest Washington physicians and other prescribers are invited to participate in a statewide overdose notification system, a first-of-its-kind approach to help address the opioid epidemic. The Washington Overdose Notification System alerts physicians when a patient has an overdose event in any emergency department in the state, giving providers real-time feedback needed to reduce overdose deaths.

The notification system is a pilot project led by Collective Medical, in collaboration with the Washington State Hospital Association, Washington State Medical Association, Washington State Department of Health, Southwest Washington Accountable Community of Health and Clark County Public Health.

About 250 providers in the Olympic Peninsula participated in a successful initial pilot. Now, Southwest Washington providers are invited to participate in the expanded pilot.

To learn more and join the project, visit the [Southwest Accountable Community of Health website \(https://southwestach.org/for-partners/washington-state-overdose-pilot/\)](https://southwestach.org/for-partners/washington-state-overdose-pilot/).

Background

Research shows that 90 percent of patients who experience an overdose event continue to receive opioid medications from their providers. Increased awareness and timely alerts can result in fewer new opioid prescriptions and fewer high-dose prescriptions. They can also create the opportunity for proactive measures, such as amending care plans or helping patients get treatment.

In 2016, there were 694 deaths from opioids in Washington, 1,451 opioid overdose hospitalizations and 14,389 opioid substance abuse treatment admissions. Most of these deaths were from prescription opioids or from illicit drug use that began with prescription opioids.

Addressing this epidemic requires innovative solutions and new approaches – like the Washington Overdose Notification System.

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