

University Hospitals Commitment Statement on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic

University Hospitals (UH) based in Cleveland, Ohio pledges support for the National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic because:

- We believe the data. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), more than 47,000 Americans died from opioid overdoses in 2017 – about 130 a day.
- We are committed to taking a 360-degree approach – from education and prevention to alternative approaches to managing pain and effectively treating addiction.
- And we know that collaboration is key to turning the tide. We must work together to advance interdisciplinary, evidence-based, and innovative solutions that will counter this epidemic.

While healthcare systems like UH cannot single-handedly resolve all the issues associated with this epidemic, we can help influence opioid prescribing practices. The [CDC](#) reports that U.S. clinicians wrote more than 191 million opioid prescriptions in 2017, translating to 58.7 prescriptions per 100 people. That's powerful data, and understanding it helped inspire UH to explore alternatives to opioids; increase education, awareness and accountability; create a holistic approach to pain management; and increase collaboration within the healthcare community.

Health Professional Education and Training

UH provides education and resources for its healthcare teams, including a Controlled Substance Toolkit for clinicians and support staff. The Toolkit ensures consistency of care across our system and provides educational programming for residents and fellows on how to safely prescribe opioids, manage opioid use disorder and utilize evidence-based, non-pharmacologic treatments for pain when possible.

Opioid Prescribing Guidelines and Evidence Standards

UH has embedded the [Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System \(OARRS\)](#) reporting tool (a required prescription drug monitoring program in Ohio) into our electronic health record. Caregivers can see information about a patient's use of controlled substances before issuing a prescription. Also, our UH Care Continues platform uses algorithms to evaluate patient pain needs and risk factors for addiction or opioid-use disorder as they transition out of the hospital.

Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Services

The UH Pain Management Institute brings together healthcare providers from multiple disciplines to optimize care and treat patients who suffer from [physical pain](#), [psychological pain](#) or a combination of both. It's a customized approach to managing pain based on the biopsychosocial experiences and needs of the individual patient. Also, through our [UH Connor Integrative Health Network](#), we have increased access to non-pharmacologic treatments for pain.

Sharing Research, Data, Metrics and other Useful Information

UH is one of five regional hospital systems collaborating on the [Northeast Ohio Hospital Opioid Consortium](#). Dr. Randy Jernejcic, UH vice president of clinical integration, serves as physician chair of the Consortium, which aspires to reduce the impact of the opioid epidemic in the region by sharing and implementing evidence-based practices, promoting policy changes, and increasing prevention efforts.

UH looks forward to working with NAM's Action Collaborative in a similar way by sharing pertinent research, data, metrics and other useful information about our efforts to address the opioid epidemic in accordance with our vision of "advancing the science of health and the art of compassion."