

Premier Inc.'s Commitment to Take Action on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic

On top of losing family members and friends to the opioid epidemic, it's costing consumers and taxpayers, as well as hospitals. In fact, annual hospital care for overdose patients represents a significant portion of healthcare expenditures and can be detrimental to providers in regions with high addiction rates.

A [Premier analysis found](#) that total care for patients who experienced an opioid overdose resulted in \$1.94 billion in annual hospital costs across 647 healthcare facilities nationwide. The total added costs to the U.S. healthcare system are an estimated 11.3 billion annually, or 1 percent of all hospital expenditures.

There is an urgent need to provide health systems and emergency caregivers with frontline solutions to stem the tide of opioid addiction in our communities.

Healthcare providers face a two-fold challenge – 1) an influx of patients in the system, inundating an already busy workforce; and 2) the need to advance pain management and preventative practices to prevent issues in the first place.

Premier is committed to helping clinicians develop, test and scale frontline solutions to prevent and reduce addiction, and manage pain for patients safely and effectively.

Premier is working with its alliance of more than 4,000 hospitals to solve this problem in five key ways.

1. **Advocating for change.** Premier partners with professional associations and federal agencies to help its members better manage these patients, as well as advocates for changes to regulations and policies that limit care coordination.
2. **Collaborating to design, test and scale new care models.** Members of Premier's Hospital Improvement Innovation Network (HIIN) are [testing and designing](#) new care delivery processes to better manage pain and the potential for opioid drug addiction. As part of Premier's HIIN, 56 hospitals are participating in a safer post-operative pain management and addiction prevention pilot to set new standards for the industry in reducing patient harm from opioid misuse, dependence and addiction.
3. **Supporting better pain management practices.** Using learnings from its members, Premier developed a [Safer Pain Management Toolkit](#) that provides easy-to-access information and an aggregated inventory of products, solutions and resources that support pain management methods to improve patient safety.
4. **Using data to understand how these patients are cared for.** Data that shows opioid visits, utilization and prescribing practices in various units, and especially the emergency department, can help providers understand where they have opportunities. Premier shares actionable, standardized reports with health system leaders to help them easily and quickly benchmark internal patterns relative to opioid overdoses to measure their performance based on industry

trends and pinpoint opportunity areas. Premier also transparently shares its data on [national industry trends](#).

5. **Monitoring and tracking patients in real time.** Premier is advancing technology to monitor patient status across units to help prevent adverse outcomes. For example, medication surveillance solutions can fire real-time alerts when a patient receives a potentially high-risk drug or a drug that could cause a dangerous interaction. Premier also offers clinical decision support tools, which help clinicians select the correct dosage and duration of drugs, and solutions that monitor patients who are prescribed high-dose, extended-release opioids, to help screen for signs of overdose.