University of New England College of Pharmacy Commitment Statement on Countering the US Opioid Epidemic

The University of New England (UNE) is a non-profit, private university with a comprehensive health education mission including medicine, pharmacy, dental medicine, nursing and an array of allied health professions. The mission of UNE extends throughout New England, the nation and the world with two campuses located in Maine and a third campus in Tangier, Morocco. The UNE College of Pharmacy is committed to working with our diverse health profession programs to combat the opioid crisis through education, service and research.

EDUCATION: The UNE College of Pharmacy has embedded substance abuse prevention and treatment with an emphasis on opioid use disorder (OUD) into the Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum. Evidenced based practices such as Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) are integrated into the core pharmacy curriculum and learned interprofessionally with health profession students across UNE. Pharmacy students at UNE are trained to apply opioid harm reduction strategies such as use of prescription drug monitoring programs to identify persons at risk of an opioid overdose and to prescribe, educate and dispense naloxone. Furthermore, the UNE College of Pharmacy is the only accredited program in Northern New England for continuing pharmacy education. As such, the UNE College of Pharmacy is the leading provider of OUD continuing education in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont for the pharmacy workforce.

SERVICE: Faculty at the UNE College of Pharmacy provide care for persons with OUD in general practice and specialty settings as well as ambulatory and inpatient care settings. Pharmacy faculty and students advocate in legislative sessions for opioid policy solutions in Augusta, Maine, as well as Washington DC. Faculty serve on state and national committees working to address the opioid crisis such as the Maine Prescription Drug Program Advisory Council and the Opioid Response Clinical Advisory Committee. UNE pharmacy students and faculty work with DEA and local law enforcement to host drug takeback events to reduce the risk of medication misuse.

RESEARCH: From bench research in the neurosciences to epidemiological research on drug use, UNE pharmacy faculty and students work to expand our understanding of substance misuse including OUD. Pharmacy faculty regularly disseminate knowledge at national meetings and peer reviewed journals related to OUD. UNE has also hosted community forums and scientific conferences related to the opioid crisis.

The UNE College of Pharmacy is committed to the goals of the NAM Action Collaborative on Countering the US Opioid Epidemic. We pledge to work as a network organization to participate and promote the activities of the Action Collaborative.