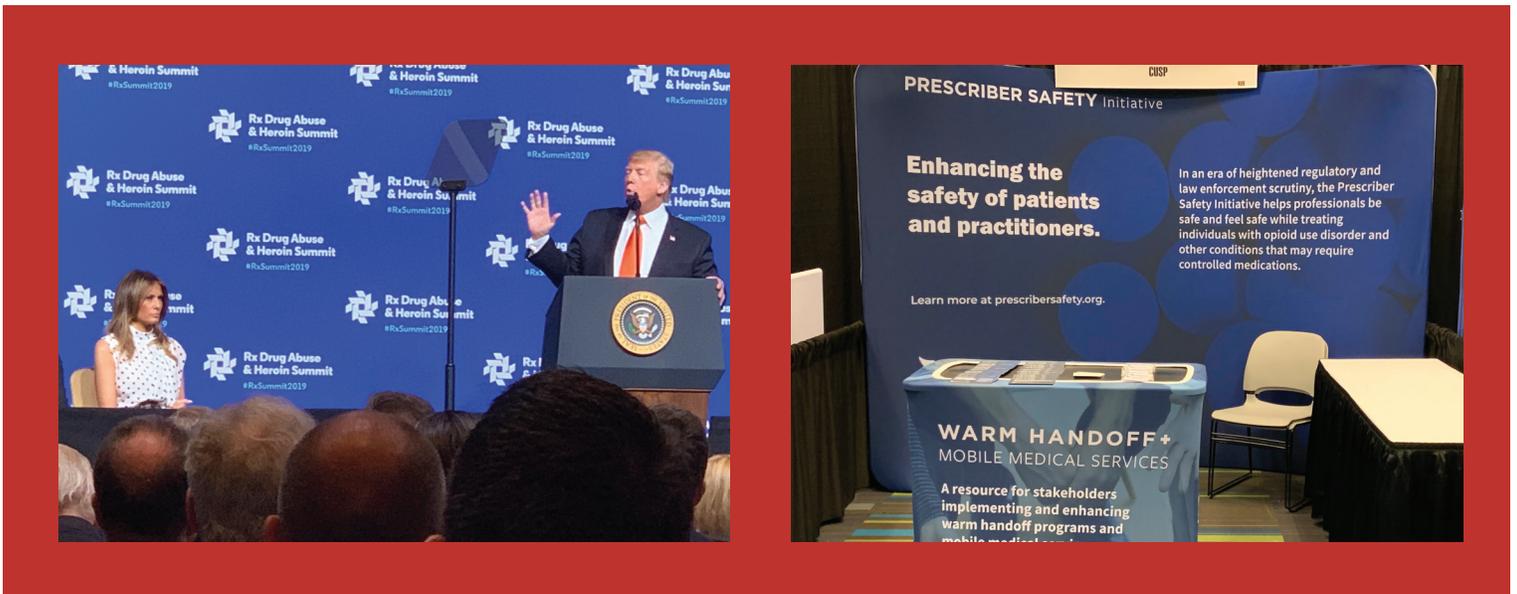


12 Takeaways from the 2019 Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit

The Center for U.S. Policy advances innovative solutions to the U.S. drug abuse, addiction, and overdose crisis through its leadership in support of the Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit (Rx Summit). The Rx Summit is an annual conference where stakeholders share ideas and findings about what is working in drug abuse prevention, treatment, and law enforcement.



Michael Barnes (Chairman, CUSP), Congressman Hal Rogers, and Dr. Andrea Barthwell (Chairwoman, FORE) at Rx Summit 2019



Twelve trends and themes emerged from this year's Rx Summit:

1 Integration of Care

Screenings, interventions, and referrals to – or provision of – treatment for opioid and other substance use disorders must be conducted broadly across the health care system, including in primary care, pain management, emergency medicine, psychiatric, obstetric, and surgical settings.

2 Medication Access

Access to medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of opioid use disorder, especially buprenorphine, must be expanded.

3 Buprenorphine Deregulation

The “X the X Waiver” call to eliminate the restrictions on the prescribing of buprenorphine for opioid use disorder imposed by the Drug Addiction Treatment Act of 2000 (DATA 2000) is gaining traction among medical professionals and drug policy leaders.

4 Telemedicine

The Drug Enforcement Administration’s restrictions on the use of telemedicine for the treatment of opioid use disorder with buprenorphine must be loosened.

5 Federal Funding

Federal funding to address opioid abuse, addiction, and overdose has reached local communities, and more funding is available from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, as well as the departments of Agriculture and Transportation.

6 Scrutiny of Prescribers

Health care providers are reluctant to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder and other controlled medications due to inadequate education and training, burdensome regulatory requirements, and increasing regulatory and law enforcement scrutiny.

7 Warm Handoffs

Communities are attempting to deploy emergency department warm handoff programs, but stigma surrounding people with active addiction and other barriers continue to inhibit their widespread implementation.

8 Criminal Justice Programs

Law enforcement leaders are embracing 1) pre-arrest diversion programs for non-violent offenders with substance use or mental health disorders and 2) the provision of medical treatment for incarcerated individuals with opioid use disorder.

9 Comprehensive Treatment

Addiction treatment programs must address all problematic substance use (not just opioid abuse), as well as the individual and environmental factors underlying a patient’s substance use.

10 Fentanyl-Laced Substances

Highly potent illicit fentanyl is increasingly found in substances sold on the dark web and other black markets as opioid pills, cocaine, and methamphetamine; all substance users should be made aware of the risks of black-market substances and have access to naloxone, the opioid overdose rescue medication.

11 Innovative Programs

States are pursuing innovative treatment approaches under Medicaid 1115 waivers; for example, a Florida pilot program will provide Medicaid coverage of housing assistance for beneficiaries with serious mental illness or a substance use disorder.

12 Border Seizures

The U.S. Postal Service and Customs and Border Protection have stepped up their inspections of incoming packages and seizures of illicit substances.