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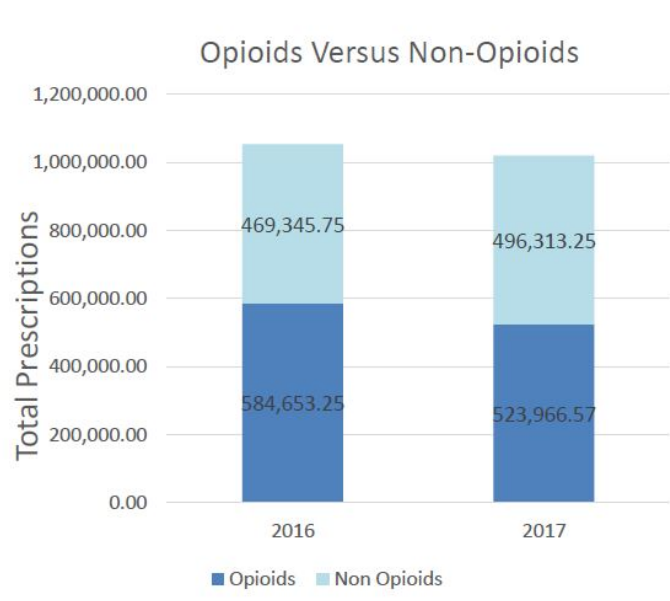
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Alaska Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Reveals Decrease in Opioid Prescriptions

April 19, 2018 JUNEAU – This week, the Alaska Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) released its [Report to the 30th Alaska State Legislature \(2018\)](#), which shows decreases in the number of opioid prescriptions and in the number of patients receiving such prescriptions.



Total prescriptions decreased nearly 13 percent from 2016 to 2017. The percent of opioids prescribed decreased by over 10 percent. The number of patients receiving an opioid prescription also declined by over 10 percent, from 150,600 patients in 2016 to 135,362 patients in 2017.

Monitoring the percent of opioids versus non-opioids over time allows policymakers to see changes in clinical decision making. In 2017, mandatory registering, reviewing, and/or reporting with the PDMP database were enacted under AS 17.30.200. The expanded requirements resulted in the state's ability to collect, analyze, and report on controlled substance usage on a level that is both qualitatively and quantitatively more detailed than in previous years.

“Along with sensible regulations and education, improved monitoring is helping to reduce opioid abuse and create a safer Alaska,” said Mike Navarre, commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. “The administration is committed to working alongside lawmakers, the medical community, and the public to put an end to the suffering caused by opioid addiction.”

From 2009 to 2015, Alaska’s rates of heroin and opioid abuse dramatically increased; the number of heroin-related deaths in the state during that timeframe quadrupled. In 2017 Governor Bill Walker declared a public health crisis in order to combat the state’s opioid epidemic.

The [Alaska PDMP](#) was established in 2008 by 26th Alaska State Legislature. The controlled substance prescription database was placed in the Board of Pharmacy within the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. Since the inception of the PDMP, multiple statutory changes have been made.

The Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing is a division of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development tasked with protecting consumers in Alaska. For information about the division, visit commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl. For additional information about the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development and its other agencies, visit commerce.alaska.gov.

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