



UCARE'S APPROACH

Every one of our members in every corner of our state served through our UCare health plans can receive support from our organization through our **Priority Plan on Opioid Use**. UCare is committed to working with partners across the state to address this growing public health issue.

No one is immune from being affected by this problem, and everyone should know help is available. We advocate for a united front among health providers to collaborate on strategies that produce positive outcomes, such as UCare's partnership with Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC).

UCARE AND HENNEPIN COUNTY TEAM UP TO ACT ON OPIOID CRISIS

A \$200,000 grant from UCare enables HCMC to embed licensed drug and alcohol counselors in the Emergency Department to help assess UCare members for treatment with a highly effective addiction medication and to connect these patients to community providers for ongoing medication treatment.

This expands HCMC's response to the current opioid epidemic and aligns with Minnesota's State Substance Abuse Strategy, which seeks to improve linkage to care for those with opioid use disorders.

A second \$200,000 UCare grant funds additional withdrawal management services. This project serves UCare members who suffer from substance use disorders and require safe, medically monitored health care while withdrawing from substances.

UCare's prevention-to-recovery solutions educate the public, prevent abuse and offer support, with the overall goal of reducing opioid misuse and providing overall health and well-being.

UCARE'S STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS OPIOID DEPENDENCY

- Collaborate with Providers and Community Organizations
- Support At-Risk Populations
- Focus on Prevention
- Grow Partnerships
- Champion Vigilant Prescribing
- Provide Alternative Pain Management Approaches
- Assess Patient's Pain and Opioid Risk
- Personalize Care Programs

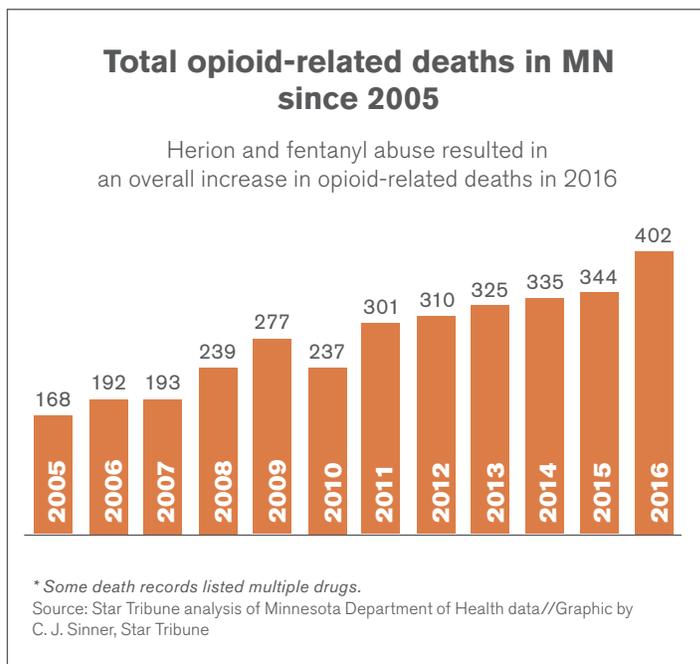
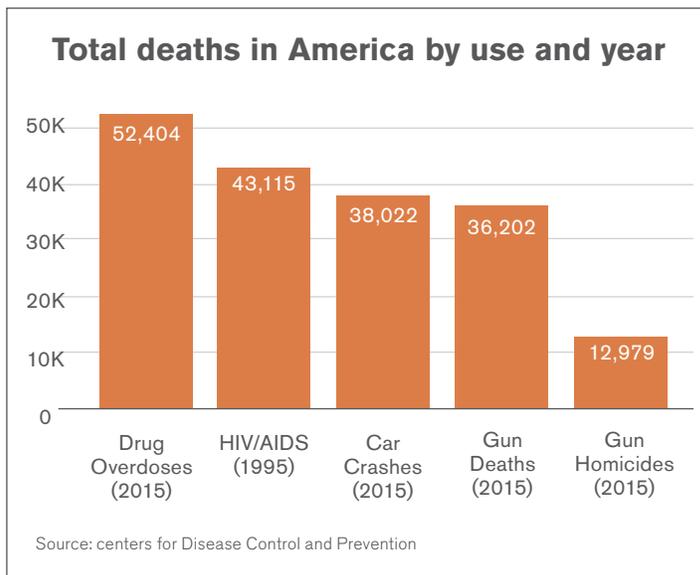
In 2016 alone, drug overdoses killed more Americans than the entire Vietnam War, motor vehicle deaths, gun violence and AIDS-related deaths ever did in a single year.

Every day, more than 90 Americans die from an opioid overdose.ⁱ The total economic burden of prescription opioid misuse in the United States is \$78.5 billion a year, including the costs of health care, lost productivity, addiction treatment and criminal justice involvement. As an organization known for its community focus and responsiveness to members, UCare is in a unique position to help address the opioid epidemic.

“UCare has the expertise and partnerships to help our members and state with the opioid epidemic,” said Mark Traynor, President and Chief Executive Officer, UCare. “Taking on this crisis embodies our mission of providing whole-person care and serving our community with our resources.”

In Minnesota, the number of those who die of opioid overdoses is growing each year. Opioid overdoses took the lives of 376 people in 2016, an increase of 12 percent. In 2016, more than 3.5 million prescriptions were written for opioids in Minnesota, translated into roughly 63 percent of the population possessing a bottle of the powerful narcotics.ⁱⁱ

UCare, with its ties to Minnesota communities, is on the front lines of this public health issue. And it is the public health field where UCare began its 30-year legacy of serving medically underserved populations. UCare has deep roots and expertise in providing comprehensive care, including those affected by the opioid misuse. **The Priority Plan on Opioid Use** pulls from UCare’s robust infrastructure and behavioral and medical expertise knowledge. Specific goals include reducing cases of misuse of opioids and improving adherence to appropriate usage, dosage and duration of use.



ⁱ <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-overdose-crisis>.

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