



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS

Obama administration announces help to combat prescription drug abuse and heroin use epidemic

On Oct. 21, 2015, President Barack Obama issued a memorandum to federal departments and agencies directing two important steps to combat the prescription drug abuse and heroin epidemic:

- **Prescriber Training:** First, to help ensure that health care professionals who prescribe opioids are properly trained in opioid prescribing and to establish the federal government as a model, the memorandum requires federal departments and agencies to provide training on the prescribing of these medications to federal health care professionals who prescribe controlled substances as part of their federal responsibilities.
- **Improving Access to Treatment:** Second, to improve access to treatment for prescription drug abuse and heroin use, the memorandum directs federal departments and agencies that directly provide, contract to provide, reimburse for or otherwise facilitate access to health benefits, to conduct a review to identify barriers to medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders and develop action plans to address these barriers.

More Americans die every year from drug overdoses than they do in motor vehicle crashes and the majority of those overdoses involve prescription medications. Health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid pain medications in 2012 – enough for every American adult to have a bottle of pills.

Opioids are a class of prescription pain medications that includes hydrocodone, oxycodone, morphine and methadone. Heroin belongs to the same class of drugs, and four in five heroin users started out by misusing prescription opioid pain medications.

In 2010, President Obama released his first National Drug Control Strategy, which emphasized the need for action to address opioid use disorders and overdoses while ensuring that individuals with pain receive safe, effective treatment. Since then, the Obama administration has supported and expanded community-based efforts to prevent drug use, pursue “smart on crime” approaches to drug enforcement, improve prescribing practices for pain medication, increase access to treatment, work to reduce overdose deaths and support the millions of Americans in recovery.

The most recent data show that the rate of overdoses involving prescription pain medication is leveling off, although it remains at an unacceptably high level. But the dramatic rise in heroin-related overdoses, which nearly doubled between 2011 and 2013, shows the opioid crisis is far from over.

Additional actions announced on Oct. 21 included:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will invest \$8.5 million on the development of tools and resources to help inform prescribers about appropriate opioid prescribing; track data on prescribing trends; research, develop and evaluate clinical quality improvement measures and programs on opioid prescribing; and improve public understanding of the risks and benefits of opioid use.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also launched HHS.gov/opioids as a one-stop federal resource with tools and information for families, health care providers, law enforcement and other stakeholders on prescription drug abuse and heroin use prevention, treatment and response.

**Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center
Lab/X-ray hours**
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday:
8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. – closed 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Thursday: 9:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. – closed 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Health & Wellness Center Entrance
Reminder: The drive-through entrance at the Health & Wellness Center is for loading and unloading only. The entrance was built with our Elders and those with mobility issues and their ease of access in mind. If you are coming to the center to pick up prescriptions, please park in one of our regular parking spaces.
**Thank you,
Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center Administration**

Important Skookum information

Letters have gone out seeking information and documentation on primary health insurance coverage to Tribal members who do not have other primary coverage information available in the Skookum Health Assistance Program (SHAP) information system.

Requests for this information will continue on an annual basis.

If you have received a letter, please respond to the request or call with questions. **SHAP is not insurance.** It is a health assistance program and payer of last resort for Tribal members without primary health insurance coverage.

We realize this is an inconvenience, however, in order to make SHAP sustainable for generations to come, we need everyone’s cooperation.

We appreciate and welcome your questions.

Thank you,

Tresa Mercier

Contact information:

- tresa.mercier@grandronde.org or 503-879-2008 – Skookum Health Assistance Program manager
- barbara.steere@grandronde.org or 503-879-2487 – Tribal Member Health Care specialist
- loretta.meneley@grandronde.org or 503-879-1359 – Certified Application assister
- or call toll free at 800-775-0095

State-Sponsored Health Care Coverage Recertification

If you receive information from your state-sponsored health care coverage notifying you of recertification, it is very important that you recertify. If you do not recertify, you risk a lapse in your coverage.

The Skookum Health Assistance Program is a payer of last resort. If you have or are eligible for any other coverage, including local, state, federal or private health insurance at a small cost to you, we strongly encourage you to apply and use it as primary coverage. If you are eligible for coverage at no cost to you, you will be required to apply and use it as primary coverage before Skookum will be able to pay.

If you apply for your state’s coverage or coverage through the federally facilitated health insurance marketplace and are not eligible, you will need to send documentation of ineligibility to the Save Our Skookum team. If you apply and are eligible, we will need a copy of any insurance cards to coordinate payment with the Skookum Health Assistance Program.

If you have questions, please contact:

- Barbara Steere at 503-879-2487 or barbara.steere@grandronde.org
- Tresa Mercier at 503-879-2008 or tresa.mercier@grandronde.org
- Loretta Meneley at 503-879-1359 or Loretta.meneley@grandronde.org
- Melody Baker at 503-879-2011 or melody.baker@grandronde.org
- Tauni McCammon at 503-879-1406 or tauni.mccammon@grandronde.org
- Erica Mercier at 503-879-2080 or erica.mercier@grandronde.org

Community Health Program

Medical Transport Services

Medical transportation services are available to Tribal members within the six-county service area when an alternate means of transportation is not available. Advance notice required.

Please call 503-879-2078 to schedule a reservation.

