

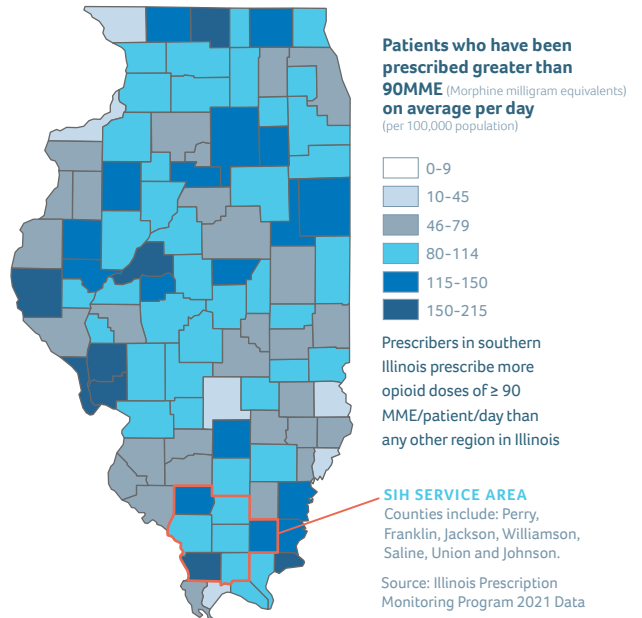
# Addressing the Opioid Crisis in Southern Illinois

Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH), the largest not-for-profit healthcare system serving Illinois' southernmost counties, is comprised of four hospitals and over 30 outpatient clinic locations.

SIH has been working collaboratively with stakeholders to address the drug and opioid epidemic in southern Illinois. The United States is in the middle of the deadliest drug crisis in our history. Fueled by the growing opioid epidemic, drug overdoses have now become the leading cause of death nationwide for people under the age of 50. There was an estimated 93,000 deaths in 2020, the highest number of overdose fatalities ever recorded in a 12-month period. Overdose deaths from synthetic opioids increased by nearly 55% during this same period. This increase in deaths began before the COVID-19 pandemic but accelerated throughout 2020 (source: State of Illinois Opioid Action Plan September 2017).

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, there has also been an increase in opioid and/or heroin overdose deaths in select southern Illinois counties from 2015-2018, with increases as much as 31% in Jackson County during this timeframe.

As the impact of the opioid crisis has dramatically increased across the nation, southern Illinoisans are also seeing the negative effects of this trend.



# 4,828,401

Opioid prescriptions filled in Illinois in 2021

Source: Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program 2021 Data

The Joint Commission, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the State of Illinois have been issuing standards, guidelines and laws to address pain management and opioid use and prescribing. SIH has an Opioid Stewardship Team to systematically address this issue and to increase coordination.

## OUR MISSION:

The SIH Opioid Stewardship Team will address the misuse and abuse of opioids by examining and improving practices and policies related to pain assessment, pain management and safe opioid prescribing and use. The team will assess current policies/practices and implement and evaluate evidence based strategies/recommendations in the following settings: Inpatient, Outpatient, Emergency Department, and Community.

## OVERALL SIH EFFORTS:

- Participated in the Vizient Opioid Stewardship Collaborative to examine opioid utilization, management and safety.
- Development of policies, procedures and the placement of medication drop-off locations at four SIH sites.
- Promotion of responsible prescribing practices through clinical and community education and integration of Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program with Epic.
- Harm reduction efforts include facilitating referrals from ED's to treatment providers and Naloxone distribution in the community and through ED's.
- Efforts to expand medication assisted recovery and increased report monitoring with education and intervention.
- Established Drug Overdose Prevention Program (DOPP) to increase community-wide Naloxone distribution.

## The Following are Highlights of Efforts Thus Far

### INPATIENT

- Reviewed The Joint Commission (TJC) Standards that went into effect January 1, 2018.
- Conducted a gap analysis related to TJC Standards.
- Providing additional discharge instructions to patients about safe medication disposal and drop-off locations.
- Developing improved reporting capabilities/data capture.
- Implemented mandatory nursing education on "Pain Assessment and Management".
- Additional education of nursing staff regarding healthy alternatives to pain management for patients has been developed.
- Improved ease of documentation for pain assessment/reassessment.
- Exploring alternatives for pain management.

### AMBULATORY

- Offer Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) workshops for physicians.
- Integrated Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program into Epic for easy access.
- Review of the pain agreement.
- Patient education materials for patients prescribed Fentanyl patch developed.
- Conducted pilot at Logan Primary Care to monitor patients that had been prescribed opioids. Plans are in place to expand a program to all SIH Medical Group primary care practices.
- Collaborated with the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians and SIU School of Medicine on opioid grants to increase provider education.
- Expanded Opioid Education and Naloxone Distribution Program (OEND) to nineteen SIH Clinics.
- Developed and distributed "A Guide for Primary Care Providers: Opioid Stewardship and Chronic Pain".

### EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

- Conducted FMEA (Failure, Mode, Effect Analysis) looking at pain management during ED visits.
- An ED Warm Hand-off process was piloted in the Emergency Departments at three SIH hospitals to link patients with MAR providers. A Community Engagement Specialist from a local addiction treatment facility has been placed in the EDs for quick access to patients who need referred for services. Over 120 patients were assisted with approximately 4,000 patients being screened each month.
- Created handout for physicians to give to patients related to opioid prescribing titled "What you need to know, Taking Opioids Responsibly".
- Explored the use of additional non-opioid alternatives to pain management in the ED.
- Updated pain management policy to reduce narcotic prescribing.
- Established Opioid Education and Naloxone Distribution Programs in all 4 SIH Emergency Departments.
- Providing information on the patient's After Visit Summary about the availability of Narcan in all four SIH Emergency Departments.

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PREVENTION & OUTREACH

Work is completed through action team meetings/community efforts.

- SIH has partnered with agencies and organizations in the community including but not limited to SIU School of Medicine Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development, Community Behavioral Health Association, Jackson County Health Department, Egyptian Public & Mental Health Department, Gateway, Centerstone, Take Action Today, Shawnee Health, Illinois Department of Public Health, IL DHS DASA, and many others.
- Updates Substance Misuse Resource Guide ([www.hsidn.org/resources](http://www.hsidn.org/resources)).
- Collaborates to host town hall meetings, educational activities, trainings, certification courses, action team, coalition, and substance misuse task force meetings.
- Provides NARCAN®/Naloxone and training targeted to medical first responders, law enforcement, healthcare providers and community members.
- Action teams, coalitions and task forces include:
  - Illinois Opioid Crisis Response Advisory Council
  - Franklin-Williamson County ROSC Council
  - Jackson County Behavioral Health Action Team
  - Jackson, Franklin, Williamson Counties Access to Care Team
  - Jackson-Perry County ROSC Council

### WAYS TO ASSIST IN ADDRESSING THE EPIDEMIC IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS:

- Utilize the Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program.
- Learn more at [cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/index.html](http://cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/index.html)
- Refer your patients to local substance abuse agencies. See [hsidn.org/resources](http://hsidn.org/resources) for more information.
- Promote the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances 1-833-2FINDHELP
- Participate in the SIH Opioid Stewardship Team or one of the other teams.
- Participate in a community coalition.
- Attend a local training or workshop. Watch the SIH Huddle or SIH Medical Group Physician Update for details.



Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances  
**1-833-2FINDHELP**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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