



BRITTANY
PETTERSEN
SEVENTH DISTRICT OF COLORADO

National Landscape

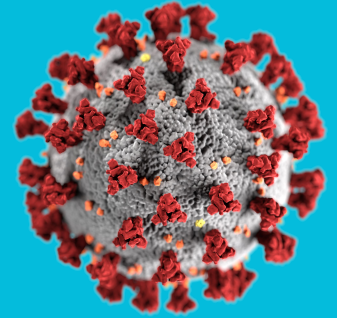


- Third Wave of Opioid Epidemic
 - More people have died than all world wars combined
- Opioid Epidemic Costs Nationally
 - \$1.04 trillion in 2018
 - \$985 trillion in 2019
 - \$1.5 trillion in 2020
- Opioid Epidemic Costs in Colorado
 - \$13.8 billion

Colorado Statistics

- Colorado ranks 23rd in the nation for overdose deaths
- In 2022, Colorado was one of the 30 states that experienced a decrease in drug overdose deaths
- In 2021, 80,000 Colorado didn't receive needed SUD treatment
- Inadequate insurance coverage prevented Coloradans from getting mental health services

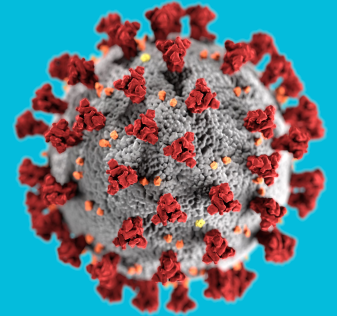
COVID-19 Pandemic



Overdoses spiked during the beginning of the pandemic

- Increase in anxiety and anxiety drug prescription
- High level of relapse
- Lack of access to care

COVID-19 Pandemic



Impact of COVID-19 travel restrictions on fentanyl market:

- Traffickers shifted from heroin-fentanyl to fentanyl
- As a result, fentanyl is:
 - Cheaper → \$3-10 per dosage unit
 - More dangerous → Powder form
 - More prevalent → Increase of fentanyl seizures from 2018 to 2022 in CO
 - 2,540 dosage units to 923,996 dosage units

Global Landscape

- Over 15 million people consume illicit opioids globally
- Global illicit opioid market is valued at \$55 to \$65 billion
- Trafficking:
 - Ports of Entry
 - Border
 - Mail



Global Landscape

- Trafficking:
 - 86.3% of convicted fentanyl traffickers are U.S. citizens
 - Over 90% of fentanyl seizures are at legal crossing points (Ports of Entry)
 - 0.02% of the people arrested by Border Patrol for crossing illegally possessed any fentanyl whatsoever
 - Inadequate data on trafficking through Postal Services



Federal Response



- Support for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act
 - First passed in 2018, up for reauthorization this year
 - Communities of Recovery Reauthorization Act
- The American Rescue Plan Act
 - \$1.5 billion in block grants for the prevention and treatment of substance use disorder
 - \$30 million for community-based funding of harm-reduction services, including naloxone distribution and syringe services programs
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
 - \$3.4 billion investment for increasing screening and modernizing our security at the ports

Federal Concerns

- House Appropriations to be voted on this September
 - House majority are trying to slash investments in workforce / education programs and research at NIH
- Senate Appropriations passed out of the Appropriations Committee
 - Increased funding for mental health research, opioid treatment and prevention, and workforce / education programs despite overall cut by \$7.6 billion
- H.R. 467, HALT Fentanyl Act
 - Permanently schedules all fentanyl-related substances as a schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act

Federal Priorities

- Drug Trafficking
- Public Awareness Campaigns
- Harm Reduction
- Treatment
- Workforce
- Screening
- Housing
- Continuum of Care
- Criminal Justice Reform



Federal Priorities - Drug Trafficking

- Identify how drug cartels are using our financial system
 - Support and strengthen Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN)
 - Pressure on China
 - Regulate cryptocurrencies
 - Hold social media companies and peer to peer payment platforms accountable
 - Such as PayPal, Venmo, WhatsApp Payments, etc.
 - Coordination of Agencies
 - H.R. 2616, the Stop the Import of Fentanyl Act of 2023

Federal Priorities - Screening

- Invest in more affordable and effective screening techniques
- USPS Inspector General's recommendations:
 - Authorize Postal Inspection Services to inspect domestic packages
 - Approve separate drug trafficking penalties for utilization of U.S. Mail in trafficking
 - Designated personnel to organize strategic inspection
- Federal reports on the rollout of the \$3.4 billion for increased screening and modernizing security at Ports of Entry

Federal Priorities - Public Awareness Campaign

- Funding to support community response
 - Outreach and awareness campaigns on dangers of fentanyl
 - Outreach and training in high schools and colleges

Federal Priorities - Harm Reduction

- Expand programming that meets people where they are
- Mass distribution of naloxone
 - Hospitals As Naloxone Distribution Sites (HANDS) Act
- Expansion of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)
 - Reduce barriers for physicians to prescribe MAT
 - Fund the expansion in MAT deserts

Federal Priorities - Treatment

- Coverage of detox, residential, and inpatient treatments with all payers
- Additional funding to cover uninsured
- Coverage based off of ASAM criteria
- Expand access to methadone
- Medicaid State Plan option to cover detox, inpatient, and residential treatment for individuals with SUD

Federal Priorities - Workforce

- Loan repayment programs in critical need areas
- Free certification
 - Outreach to individuals in recovery
- Increase reimbursement rates for behavioral health services
- Reciprocity of licensure

Federal Priorities - Housing

- Crisis in CO
- Housing in the SUPPORT Act
- SUD and Housing

Federal Priorities - Support the Continuum of Care

- 988
 - Ensure it supports behavioral health needs, not just suicide prevention
 - Entry point for care coordination
- Support comprehensive navigation platforms
- Fund LEAD, STAR, and Co-Responder Programs

Federal Priorities - Criminal Justice

- Support diversion programs
- MAT in jails
- Medicaid coverage in jails
- Record sealing initiatives for lower-offense charges of small possession of drugs

Colorado Successes

- MAT in Jails
- MAT Access in Communities
- Inpatient and Residential Treatment Coverage

Colorado Recommendations

- Access to treatment
- Parity Law
- Reimbursement rate transparency and standardization
- Workforce
- Care Coordination
 - 988
 - Navigation Platform
- ARPA dollars
- Committee Recommendations

Colorado Recommendations

- Access to treatment
 - Regional disparities
 - Population gaps
 - MAT
 - Mobile MAT units
 - Jail-based services
 - End ability of healthcare facilities to do warrant checks

Colorado Recommendations

- Parity Law
 - Biden Administration proposed rule expands on Colorado laws:
 - Requires the use of outcomes data
 - Requires addressing of material disparities in outcome data
 -
 - Parity Law should not rely on individual consumer complaints

Colorado Recommendations

- Reimbursement rate transparency and standardization
 - Ensure money goes to RAES and providers for intended purposes
 - Significant regional disparities in reimbursement rates
 - Accountability with coordination of care
 - RAES should identify where their clients were referred and confirm they were connected
 - Survey client experiences

Colorado Recommendations

- Workforce
 - Support certification for community health workers and peers
 - Free certification for non-clinical professions
 - Support loan repayment programs for high-need professions

Colorado Recommendations

- Coordination of Care
 - Update 988 to include services beyond suicide prevention
 - Navigation platform
 - Only includes BHA licensed providers
 - Does not include a mobile option, which was the intention
 - Should include all CO providers with the ability to navigate regionally

Colorado Recommendations

- ARPA
 - \$550 Million in ARPA funds to behavioral health
 - Workforce crisis and state contracting has slowed the rollout of funds
 - No-cost extension

Colorado Recommendations

- Committee
 - Meet every-other year for the next 4-6 years
 - Ensure that the work of previous years is continuing reviewed and updated as needed

What's Possible:



What's Possible:



Thank you!



If you would like to stay connected with my staff, please email:
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