HOPE Agenda
Heroin, Opioid Prevention & Education

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JOHN NYGREN – ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 89
The Growing Epidemic in Wisconsin

- Heroin and prescription opioid cases have been spiking in the last few years in Wisconsin. It is now considered an epidemic.
- This epidemic affects big cities as well as smaller communities.
- Rural areas are also at risk. These areas are less equipped to handle this problem than larger cities like Milwaukee and Madison.
- The heroin and opioid epidemic has become a problem that has increased crime statewide and shocked entire communities.
Statistics
Statistics

Rates of heroin-related emergency department visits, hospital discharges, and deaths, Wisconsin, 2007-2014

Heroin-related deaths, Wisconsin, 2014

Number of Deaths

Age (years)


Source: Office of Health Informatics, Wis. Department of Health Services

Median age 34 years old
67% completed high school or less
75% male
80% white
87% unmarried
88% died at home
HOPE Agenda: The Introduction

- In 2013, Rep. Nygren introduced seven bills that laid the foundation for the HOPE Agenda.
- During the 2015-16 Legislative session, Rep. Nygren offered 10 additional bills as a continuation of his HOPE Agenda.
- The bills target heroin addiction and the root of Wisconsin’s epidemic: prescription drug abuse and addiction. In the majority of cases, heroin addiction begins with an addiction to prescription medications.
- Today, there are 17 laws that make up the HOPE Agenda legislative package.
Prevention

According to legislators, police chiefs, sheriffs, and judges, we can’t arrest our way out of this problem. In Wisconsin, Attorney General Brad Schimel started the Dose of Reality campaign that supplies materials to parents, students, and the medical community on the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

Besides our drug take-back days twice a year, we passed legislation to encourage communities to set up drug disposal programs for unwanted prescription drugs so they do not fall into the wrong hands. (2013 WI ACT 198)

We also requested that our Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) issue guidelines regarding best practices in prescribing controlled substances. These best practices will help reduce instances of overprescribing and, in turn, lessen prescription opioid abuse and addiction. (2015 WI ACT 269)
Harm Reduction

In 2014, Wisconsin passed a law to provide the overdose antidote naloxone to first responders as well as individuals at risk of overdose and their relatives. We also passed a law allowing pharmacies to dispense naloxone without a prescription through a standing order (2013 WI ACT 200) (2015 WI ACT 115).

Wisconsin adopted a Good Samaritan Law that provides limited immunity from certain criminal prosecutions for a person who seeks assistance from the police or medical professionals for another individual who has overdosed on controlled substances (WI ACT 194).

In 2015, Wisconsin changed the requirement for those who dispense certain prescription drugs to submit information to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) from 7 days to 24 hours. This law requires a practitioner to review a patient’s record when initially prescribing a monitored prescription drug. We also added that when law enforcement encounters an inappropriate use or an infraction of the law concerning scheduled drugs, they upload the information (2015 WI ACT 266) (2015 WI ACT 268).
Treatment

There is growing evidence that supports the use of medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorders. In 2014, Wisconsin created regional pilot programs to address opioid addiction in underserved areas. The treatment programs will assess individuals to determine treatment needs, provide counseling, and medical or abstinence-based treatment. After individuals successfully complete the program, they will be transitioned into county-based or private post-treatment care (2013 WI ACT 195).

In 2013 and 2014 we increased funding to our Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) programs. These programs have proven to be an effective and efficient means of combatting drug and alcohol abuse (2013 WI ACT 197) (2015 WI ACT 338).
Working with Stakeholders

- Collaboration and buy-in is key to passage of these bills.
- We worked with stakeholders for over a year to make sure there was support for each initiative.
- We consulted with the medical community, law enforcement, fellow legislators, the governor, the attorney general, and advocates statewide.
- Because of our efforts, all 17 pieces of legislation passed both the Assembly and Senate unanimously.
Thank you

Questions?