



GENERAL ACUPUNCTURE

The Plan to Stop Opioid Related Deaths in the U.S.

Editorial Staff | DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), one of 70 major health organizations - including physicians, hospitals, insurers, and more - worked to develop and release recommendations aimed at addressing the opioid crisis within the U.S.

The "Roadmap for Action" gives guidance to health care leaders, lawmakers, and regulators on comprehensive approaches to stemming the crisis, which has led to an average of more than 115 people in America dying each day from opioid addiction.

NCCAOM and the other organizations, convened by the Healthcare Leadership Council, have been in communication for several months, building consensus on specific opioid-related suggested actions for Congress, federal regulators, and the health care industry. The group worked with the Duke-Margolis Health Policy Center, led by former Food and Drug Administration (FDA) commissioner and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services administrator Dr. Mark McClellan, in developing these recommendations.

The Roadmap calls for improved patient access to evidence-based, non-opioid, non-pharmacological, opioid-sparing pain management therapies as a crucial step towards reducing the overreliance on opioid drugs and turning back the tide of the crisis.



"The NCCAOM is honored to have actively dialogued with a broad spectrum of voices across the continuum of care and the health care industry in creating these actionable recommendations," said Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, chief executive officer of the NCCAOM. "The country is facing intertwined crises of opioid misuse and pain management, and non-opioid, non-pharmacological treatments such as acupuncture and other interventions will be essential in handling patients' pain as a complement to shorter opioid prescriptions or as an even more effective therapy for chronic pain."

Five essential priorities to reverse trends in opioid abuse:

- Improve approaches to pain management
- Prevent opioid misuse
- Expand access to substance use disorder treatment services
- Increase use of care coordination through data collection and analyses
- Pay for care that is coordinated and high quality

Click [here](#) to read the full Roadmap for Action recommendations.

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