**Definitions**

- **Heroin Epidemic** - As pill mills close, prescribing is becoming tighter, demand among younger users rise, and dealer's profits rise, addicts are turning to heroin. This increases the heroin addiction rate and overdose rate.

- **Opiate** - Any preparation or derivative of opium. Opiate drug types include heroin, opium, morphine and codeine.

- **Opioid** - Any narcotic, natural or synthetic, that behaves in the body like an opium-derived drug. They can be naturally occurring or man-made. Examples include oxycodone (OxyContin), fentanyl, methadone, hydrocodone (Vicodin.)

- **Fentanyl** - A powerful opiate that is 30-50 times more potent than heroin. Typically used during anesthesia or to treat patients with severe pain. Recent overdoses have been connected to illegally-produced and trafficked fentanyl, not diverted pharmaceutical-grade fentanyl.

- **Carfentanil** - A synthetic opioid that is 100 times more potent then fentanyl and up to 10,000 times more potent than morphine. It has been missed with heroin, causing an increase in the number of overdoses. There are no known medicinal purposes for humans. It is typically used to sedate large animals, such as elephants.\(^9\)

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**Who is Impacted?**

Heroin use has increased nationwide among men, women of most age groups and all income levels. The most dramatic growth has occurred in groups with historically lower rates of heroin use, such as women and people with private insurance and higher incomes.
Ohio Statistics

- Ohio leads the nation in opioid overdose deaths.
- Heroin: One in 9 heroin deaths across the U.S. happened in Ohio.¹
- Synthetic Opioids: About one in 14 synthetic opioid deaths across the U.S. happened in Ohio.²
- Ohio has the highest number of deaths from synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl and carfentanil, with 590 deaths out of 5,544 nationally, or 7.4 percent.³,⁴
- Multiple Substances: Not only are people using heroin, they are also abusing multiple other substances simultaneously, such as alcohol, cocaine, and prescription medications.
- The rate of opioid-related ED visits increased in almost all States between 2009 and 2014, more than doubling in Ohio (119.1 percent), the highest of any state.⁵
- Between 2005 and 2014, the national rate of opioid-related inpatient stays increased 64.1 percent.

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### Opioid Overdose Deaths in Ohio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Overdoses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Percentage of all Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Selected Drug by Year, Ohio, 2010-2015

*Prescription Opioids not including fentanyl.
As heroin use increased, 299 heroin-related overdose deaths occurred in Cuyahoga County in 2014 while fentanyl-related deaths increased from 5 in 2013 to 394 in 2016.

In 2015, one person died every day in Cuyahoga County from a drug overdose.

At least 517 victims died in 2016, more than double the 228 from 2015.

In April, 2017:
- At least 41 fatal cases due to heroin/fentanyl (9 cases pending additional testing.)
- Victims' ages range from 27 – 65.
- 31 Male victims; 10 Female victims.
- 7 African American victims; 34 Caucasian victims (3 Hispanic.)
Cuyahoga County (Continued)

2017 CCMEO Overdose Deaths, Most Common Drugs Involved
Combined is heroin and fentanyl in some combination (Fentanyl analogues will be counted under Fentanyl Columns).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Heroin</th>
<th>Heroin/Fentanyl Combined</th>
<th>Fentanyl</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Cocaine/Fentanyl Combined</th>
<th>Opioid ODs (awaiting confirmation tests)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAN-50 total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEB-71 total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAR-47 total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APR-61 total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office revised 5-15-17

Figure 8 – Cuyahoga County heroin-related deaths, Place of Incident, 2013
## Contributing Factors

### Supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Legal”</th>
<th>“Illegal”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Growth in overall RX Drug use</td>
<td>• Widespread diversion of RX Drugs through multiple channels:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New Clinical RX Pain Management Guidelines</td>
<td>o Internet “pharmacies”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aggressive marketing of new extended-release opioids</td>
<td>o Pill Mills and unscrupulous pharmacies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• General over prescribing</td>
<td>• Improper storage and sharing of unused medication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pressure to satisfy “customers” in Healthcare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demand

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Perceived safety of prescription drugs</td>
<td>• Healthcare consumers seen as “customers”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Substance Misuse/Abuse</td>
<td>• 2 out of 3 patients who visit a doctor leave with at least one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Diversion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Doctor Shopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### CONCLUDING FACTORS:

#### EPIDEMICS OF UNINTENTIONAL DRUG OVERDOSE AND SIGNIFICANT EVENTS, OHIO 1979-20121,2,3

- **Intractable Pain Act Enacted in Ohio**
- **OxyContin approved by FDA ‘95**
- **Fentanyl patch approved by FDA ‘98**
- **Methadone use as an analgesic increases**
- **Emergence of pill mills in Ohio**
- **Opana (Morphine) Introduced (‘06)**

Economic Impact

Drug overdoses are associated with high direct and indirect costs. Unintentional fatal drug overdoses cost Ohioans $2.0 billion in 2012 in medical and work loss costs; while non-fatal, hospital-admitted drug poisonings cost an additional $39.1 million. The total cost equaled an average of $5.4 million each day in medical and work loss costs in Ohio.

In the fiscal year that ended in June 2015, 5,329 of 19,755 inmates entered the state Department of Rehabilitation and Correction system on drug convictions. At the annual cost of $22,836 per inmate per year, $122 million was spent by taxpayers to feed, house and clothe drug offenders.

In 2014 and 2015, the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services will spend $61.7 million over two years on drug treatment in prisons, $12.5 million over three years on housing for recovering addicts, and $1 million over two years for naloxone, a drug used to reverse potentially fatal overdoses from heroin and other opioids.

Hospital care of babies born to addicted mothers cost Ohio's health-care system $97 million in 2013, the state Department of Health estimates.

Ohio's association of child-welfare agencies reports that nearly 86,000 cases entering the state system each year involve families dealing with opiate or cocaine abuse. Such cases have risen from 15 percent of the caseload to more than 25 percent in the past five years. The annual cost of caring for children of drug addicts: an estimated $45 million a year.

References
2 The Columbus Dispatch, November 29, 2016.
4 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, November 2016.
6 Source: Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office revised 5-15-17
8 Johnson, Alan and Candisky, Catherine; Drug abuse brings heavy toll to families, taxpayers, The Columbus Dispatch, December 28, 2015.