

KNCK OUT OPIOID ABUSE

Do No Harm: Exploring Strategies for Safer Prescribing of Opioids

An online continuing education webinar

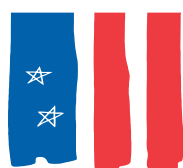
Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae, Acting Gloucester County Prosecutor Christine Hoffman and Salem County Prosecutor Kristin J. Telsey invite healthcare professionals from Gloucester, Cumberland and Salem counties to earn their New Jersey required one hour of continuing education on opioids for **FREE** through a sponsorship by the prosecutor's offices of Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties. Participants can use the discount code "**TRICOUNTY**" and get access to the webinar "Do No Harm: Exploring Strategies for Safer Prescribing of Opioids" free of charge.

VISIT NJSafeRx.com



This webinar fulfills the New Jersey one-hour continuing education requirement concerning prescription opioids for doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathic medicine, dentists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, residents, fellows and medical students.

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Partnership for a
Drug-Free New Jersey

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PRESS RELEASE

December 1, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem County Prosecutor's Offices Offer Continuing Medical Education Scholarships to Medical Providers on Safe Prescribing Practices

Mullica Hill, NJ -- Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae, Acting Gloucester County Prosecutor Christine Hoffman, and Salem County Prosecutor Kristin Telsey announced today, at a joint press event hosted at Inspira Medical Center Mullica Hill, an initiative to fight the statewide opioid epidemic by teaming up with Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey (PDFNJ) to provide scholarships for opioid prescribing education to healthcare providers within each of their counties.

"Prescribed opioids continue to be a factor on the drug harm index in our region, especially in Salem County," **said Salem County Prosecutor Kristin Telsey**. "We are always looking for opportunities to leverage our resources when it comes to opioid education and substance abuse prevention."

Each Prosecutor's Office is awarding scholarships for prescribers within their county to participate in PDFNJ's Safe Prescription continuing medical education course entitled, "Do No Harm: Exploring Strategies for Safer Prescribing of Opioids." The course is specifically tailored for healthcare professionals including 1) doctors of medicine, 2) doctors of osteopathic medicine, 3) dentists, 4) nurse practitioners, 5) physician assistants, 6) nurses, 7) residents, 8) fellows and, 9) medical students.

"This unique approach, providing continuing medical education to prescribers is a natural intersection for law enforcement and the medical community," **said Acting Gloucester County Prosecutor Christine Hoffman**. "The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey has been a trusted ally in our ongoing battle against opioid abuse affecting Gloucester residents."

PDFNJ's accredited online course features medical, law enforcement, and legal experts discussing the impact of the opioid epidemic on New Jersey and providing the most updated information on how to

prescribe opioids safely and responsibly to patients. The curriculum also fulfills New Jersey's continuing education requirement prescribers must complete to renew their license to reduce the risk of addiction and the accumulation of opioids in the household medicine cabinets.

"Each of our offices play a pivotal role fighting the opioid epidemic through both community engagement and education," **said Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae**. "Southern counties in New Jersey continue to have much higher opioid prescription rates per capita than our Central and North Jersey counterparts according to the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program. As such we hope this training becomes a catalyst for lowering prescription rates in the seemingly never-ending battle against opioid abuse in our area."

"Educating medical professionals on the risks and proper ways to treat pain and prescribe opioids is crucial to combatting the opioid epidemic our state and country are facing," **PDFNJ Executive Director Angelo Valente said**. "Prosecutors Webb-McRae, Hoffman, and Telsey continue to bring innovation from prevention and recovery programs to engaging the broader community on public safety, these three Prosecutor's Offices have emerged as a leader in this fight. Now, by making prescriber education more accessible to providers in the county, their offices provide a vital prevention opportunity to positively impact residents throughout the region."

Background on this issue and the accredited curriculum are accessible through the website, drugfreenj.org/TriCountySafeRx or through the QR Code on the attached to the appended supplemental material.

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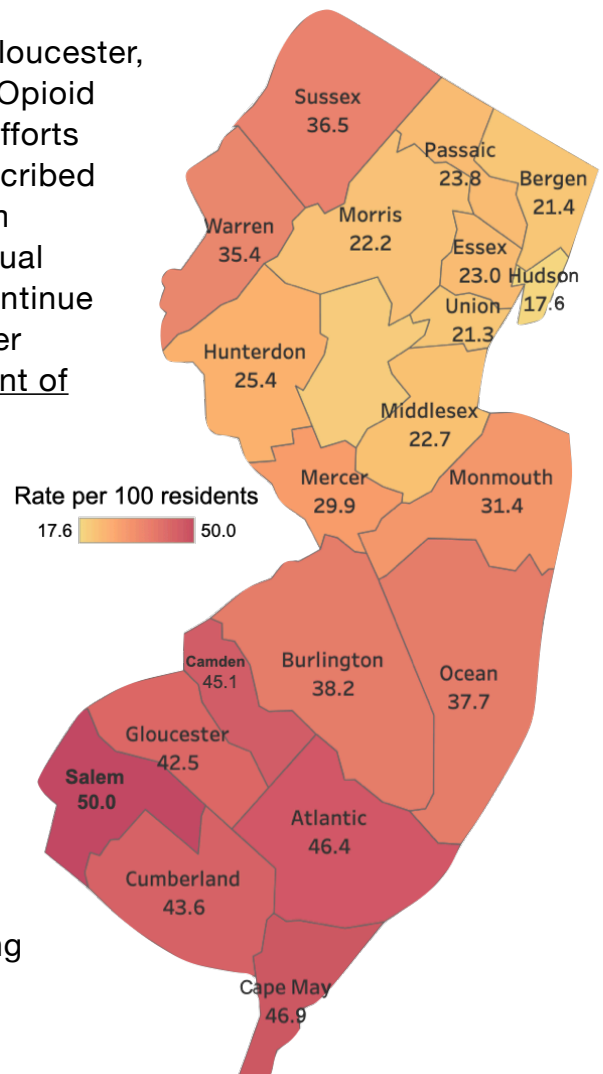
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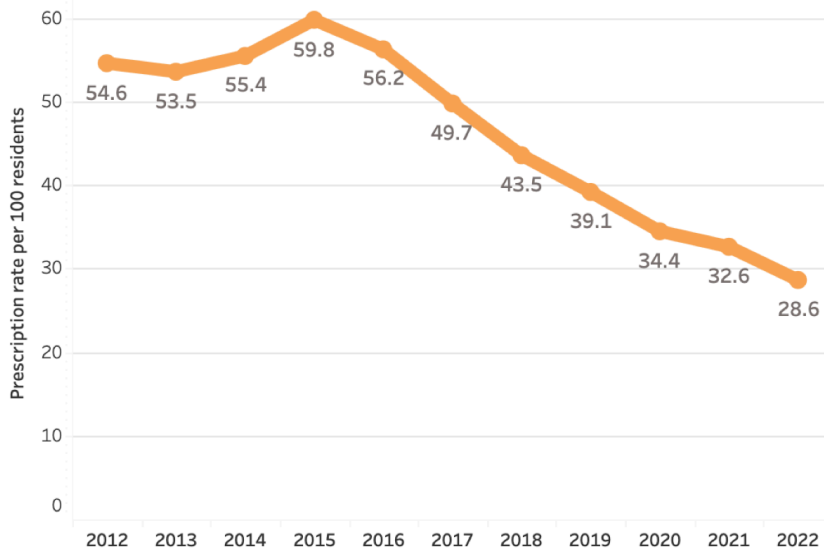
The Prosecutor's Offices in Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem play a pivotal role fighting the Opioid Epidemic through both law enforcement efforts and community outreach and engagement. Prescribed opioids continue to be a factor on the drug harm index. While correlation does not necessarily equal correlation, Southern counties in New Jersey continue to have much higher opioid prescription rates per capita than Central and North Jersey ([Department of Health Population Health New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program \(nj.gov\)](https://www.njoag.gov/programs/nj-cares/nj-cares-data-by-county/)).

The Southern counties, while by volume are less, also generally have higher rates of naloxone administration and drug toxicity deaths per capita (<https://www.njoag.gov/programs/nj-cares/nj-cares-data-by-county/>). In addition to joint law enforcement suppression efforts, partnering to ensure medical prescribers have scholarships for Safe Prescription Education Continuing Medical Education Courses is yet another way Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem is continuing to fight the battle against legal and illegal drug abuse.



New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program
Opioid Prescription Rate by County

Opioid Prescription Rate per 100 Residents (2012-2022)

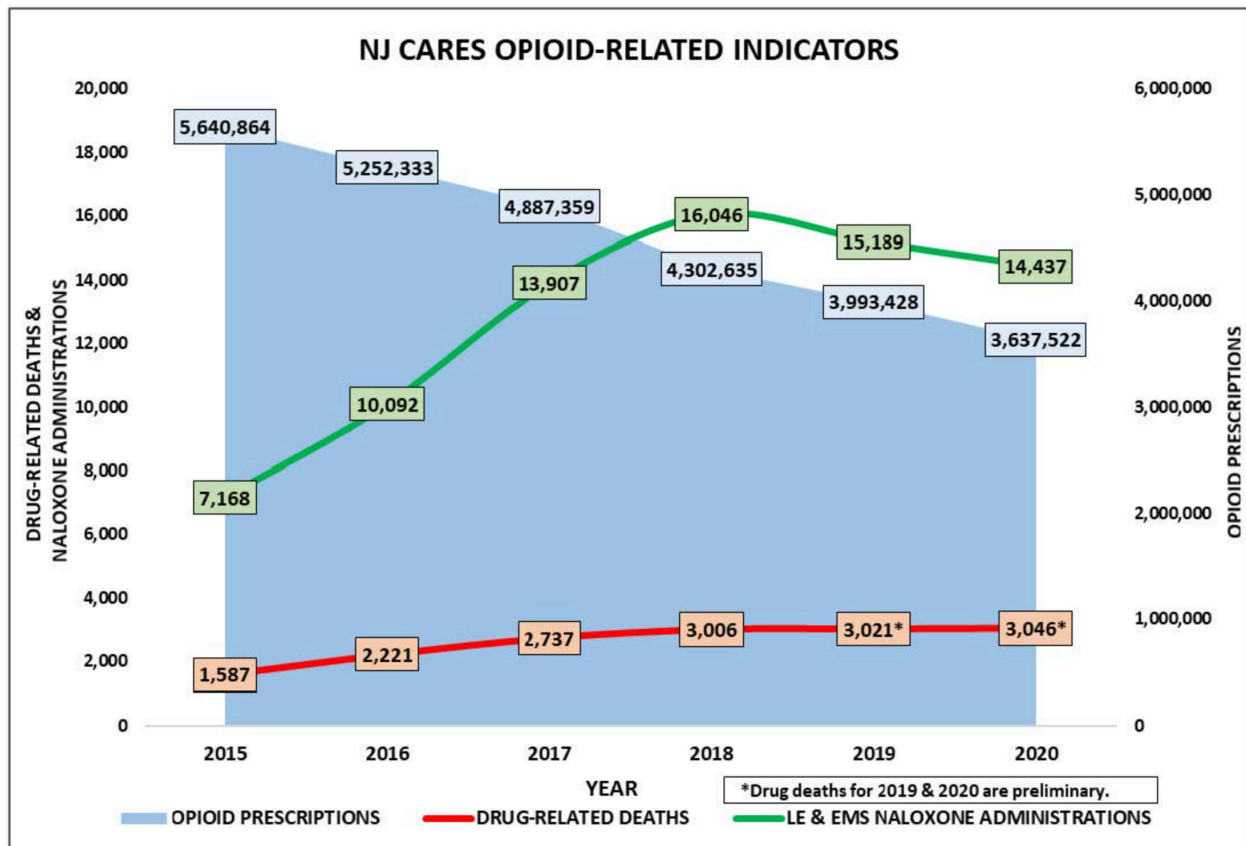


Overall, in NJ the Opioid Prescription Rate has been falling steadily since peaking in 2015. Much of this due to regulation changes ([February 15, 2017, P.L. 2017, c. 28](#)) aimed at Opioid Abuse Prevention and expert guidance on how to properly and safely prescribe for pain, such as the [NJ Division of Consumer Affairs summary of guidelines](#) and the [CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain](#).

https://www.nj.gov/health/populationhealth/opioid/opioid_pmp.shtml

This is good news and correspondingly drug deaths

and overdose reversals have leveled out and in some cases been reduced. However, since the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic some of gains in drug harm reduction is trending in the wrong direction again, notably in the six most southern counties, exasperated by illicit poly substance combinations containing lethal levels of fentanyl.



<https://www.njoag.gov/programs/nj-cares/access-to-opioid-data/>

This concerning upward trend in drug harm is the impetus behind Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae, Acting Gloucester County Prosecutor Christine Hoffman, and Salem County Prosecutor Kristin Telsey jointly announcing an initiative to fight the statewide opioid epidemic by teaming up with Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey (PDFNJ) to provide scholarships for opioid prescribing education to healthcare providers within each of their counties as a tactic to reduce the risk of addiction and the accumulation of opioids in household medicine cabinets

Each Prosecutor’s Office is awarding scholarships for prescribers within their county to participate in PDFNJ’s Safe Prescription continuing medical education course entitled, “Do No Harm: Exploring Strategies for Safer Prescribing of Opioids.” The course is specifically tailored for healthcare professionals including 1) doctors of medicine, 2) doctors of osteopathic medicine, 3) dentists, 4) nurse practitioners, 5) physician assistants, 6) nurses, 7) residents, 8) fellows and, 9) medical students. The accredited online course features medical, law enforcement, and legal experts discussing the impact of the opioid epidemic on New Jersey and providing information on how to safely and responsibly prescribe opioids to patients. It also fulfills New Jersey’s continuing education requirement prescribers must complete to renew their license.

County	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Atlantic	20	14	23	15	9	19	12	12	13	13	15	0	165
Bergen	11	16	19	11	11	11	4	9	11	10	7	0	120
Burlington	14	11	7	13	16	10	15	7	9	10	9	0	121
Camden	29	19	33	37	34	27	19	30	25	27	19	0	299
Cape May	2	2	2	5	2	0	7	5	1	3	2	0	31
Cumberland	7	10	4	5	11	8	3	4	8	8	5	0	73
Essex	39	33	33	50	38	37	34	48	27	44	25	0	408
Gloucester	3	8	7	8	5	8	9	7	7	5	5	0	72
Hudson	20	11	13	15	19	17	23	16	11	16	14	0	175
Hunterdon	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	2	0	0	10
Mercer	12	11	13	9	8	8	10	6	6	10	7	0	100
Middlesex	16	10	15	13	11	19	10	13	7	11	11	0	136
Monmouth	10	8	19	13	8	9	15	10	12	13	8	0	125
Morris	4	5	2	8	5	7	9	4	2	6	9	0	61
Ocean	13	17	11	14	23	16	11	9	19	12	6	0	151
Passaic	15	14	11	14	8	11	15	8	8	7	10	0	121
Salem	0	5	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	0	23
Somerset	2	3	3	4	3	0	2	4	1	3	3	0	28
Sussex	2	5	4	1	4	0	1	3	1	1	1	0	23
Union	8	7	6	4	13	11	7	6	9	4	8	0	83
Warren	1	2	3	1	2	0	3	6	2	2	4	0	26