



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
Blue Care Network
of Michigan

Confidence comes with every card.®



Blue Cross and BCN fight the opioid epidemic

Prescription painkillers, or opioids, can give relief to people who've had surgery, traumatic injuries or chronic pain. But they can destroy lives when relief gives way to addiction.

- Every day **more than 1,000 people are treated in the emergency department** nationwide for misusing prescription opioids.
- **On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose (includes heroin and prescription opioids).**
- More Americans died in 2016 from opioids than have ever died in a single year from HIV, gun violence or car crashes.
- In 2016, Michigan health care providers wrote **11 million prescriptions for opioid drugs** – enough to give every resident a bottle of more than 80 pills.
- Nationally, Michigan ranks **10th for highest rates of prescribing opioids and 18th for most overdose deaths.**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are working to lower these numbers and protect our members.

Seeing results:

- Successes from 2012 through 2017, based on commercial membership per month:
 - ◊ 32% reduction in opioid prescriptions
 - ◊ 33% reduction in number of opioid pills dispensed
 - ◊ 51% reduction in fentanyl products dispensed
 - ◊ 65% reduction in long-acting oxycodone and oxymorphone use
- Since 2014, the number of **members receiving the dangerous “Triple Threat” drug combination have decreased by 84 percent.** This combination of opioids, benzodiazepines and Soma® taken together can slow or even stop a person's breathing.
- About **850,000 fewer opioid pills have been dispensed** since 2014, due to the Doctor Shopper and “Triple Threat” initiatives.

A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

Prevention

Ensure safe and appropriate use: We manage our drug lists and create programs that allow appropriate opioid use when needed, while minimizing potential misuse and abuse. We target highly abused opioids with tools including prior authorization, refill restrictions and quantity limits to help prevent stockpiling and excessive quantities of pain pills. We limit coverage of opioid prescriptions to 30-day supplies per fill. Members starting opioid therapy and receiving a short-acting opioid have the first fill limited to a five-day supply.

Encourage e-prescribing: Since 2015, our rate of e-prescribing for controlled substances has increased by nearly 30 percent. Blue Cross gives doctors incentives through our value-based payment programs to increase electronic prescribing of controlled substances to protect against fraud and abuse.

Fraud Detection and Abuse Intervention

Identify at-risk members: Our pharmacists monitor claims to identify members receiving a dangerous and highly addictive drug combination commonly referred to as the “Triple Threat”. We notify prescribing doctors and if we see continued use, our Controlled Substance Workgroup of pharmacists and doctors recommends intervention.

Stop doctor shopping: A Doctor Shopper Initiative identifies members who obtain opioid prescriptions from multiple prescribers and pharmacies. We notify doctors of their patients’ behavior and encourage them to use their state’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program when starting or continuing opioid therapy.

Detect outliers: We apply algorithms to integrated pharmacy and medical claims data to identify prescribers, pharmacies and members with above average opioid prescriptions or use. Based on the findings, we may remove prescribers and pharmacies from our networks, and our Controlled Substance Workgroup may recommend member intervention.

Treatment

Integrate care: Our Controlled Substance Workgroup of doctors, behavioral health specialists, case managers, pharmacists and corporate investigators reviews pharmacy and medical claims of members with behavior reflecting opioid misuse or abuse to coordinate treatment referrals and ongoing care management.

Improve quality of care: The CLIMB pilot program uses innovative approaches such as sober coaching, in-home treatment and an online mobile app to help improve treatment adherence, increase use of medication-assisted treatment and minimize relapse.

Help members who overdose: Our opioid and heroin overdose pilot program uses real-time hospital discharge data to enable quick intervention. Behavioral health experts engage members in treatment following an overdose and inform them of available resources.

Advocacy and Awareness

Forge partnerships: Blue Cross is working with doctors, pharmacies, community organizations, policy makers, public health advocates, foundations and employers to fight this epidemic. As a result of these partnerships, we’re making opioid use safer, providing more information to help prevent addiction and arming communities to fight back.

Be Rx Safe: We participate in this campaign with Michigan’s doctors and hospitals to build awareness of the opioid problem and treatment options.

Drug disposal: Blue Cross makes significant efforts to educate and inform the public about how to get rid of unnecessary medications, including sponsoring drug take-back kiosks at certain Walgreens locations.

Engage and support community groups: Blue Cross and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation joined the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and the Superior Health Foundation to provide more than \$500,000 to organizations throughout the state to help communities start sustainable, evidence-based practices that address the growing epidemic of opioid and prescription drug abuse in Michigan.

Collaborate with providers: Blue Cross and the Michigan Opioid Prescribing Engagement Network work with our physician groups to improve statewide prescribing practices and utilization. M-OPEN works with doctors and hospitals to decrease new opioid prescriptions to surgical patients and raise awareness of the dangers of opioids.