

Compliance Today – December 2018 Considerations for prescribing opioids

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Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for the 12-month period ending July 2017^[1] showed mixed results in the battle to prevent opioid overdose deaths, with some states showing improvement, while others showed a marked increase in total drug-attributable deaths. With that said, it is difficult to refute that the United States remains mired in an opioid overdose epidemic, with 42,000 deaths during 2016^[2] arising from opioid overdose, including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and fentanyl. By one CDC estimate, the aggregate “economic burden” associated with prescription opioid misuse alone is in the range of \$78.5 billion annually in healthcare expenditures, lost worker productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice costs.^[3]

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