

31th National Black Nurses' Day on Capitol Hill
Theme: "Addressing the Epidemic of Health Inequity: NBNA's Call to Action"

Combating the Opioid Epidemic: Budget Appropriations for FY 2019

The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) applauds the 115th Congress for passing P.L. 115-271 - Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery for Patients and Communities (*SUPPORT ACT*). This broad sweeping legislation is critical to resolving one of our countries' worst drug crises and curtailing a nationwide public health emergency. NBNA respectfully seeks historic allocations to support this and other legislative initiatives aimed at addressing the opioid epidemic through prevention, treatment, recovery services and mental health interventions.

Background

- From 1999 to 2016, more than 630,000 people have died from a drug overdose.
- Around 66% of the more than 63,600 drug overdose deaths in 2016 involved an opioid.
- In 2016, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl) was 5-times higher than in 1999.
- On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.¹

Recommendations to Legislators:

- NBNA strongly recommends that the 116th Congress fully appropriate –\$10 billion in new funding in FY- 2019 for the Department of Health and Human Services.^{2,3}
- NBNA urges support for the FY- 2019 Budget proposal of a \$10 billion-dollar historic investment for combatting the Opioid Epidemic that includes provisions to address serious mental illness and emotional disturbance disorders utilizing evidence-based approaches to remedy this public health crisis across all HHS departments working in collaboration.^{2,3}
- NBNA strongly urges the full support of the 116th Congress in the implementation of all planned initiatives in the Support Act, enhanced by ensuring the full inclusion of nurse providers at all levels.
- NBNA strongly recommends the allocation of additional financial resources to the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR/NIH) to fund innovative nurse lead research initiatives to combat the Opioid Epidemic.

References

1. Opioid Overdose: Understanding the Epidemic
<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>
2. Office of the Secretary, Opioids and Serious Mental Health, retrieved from:
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fy2019-departmental-management-intro-accessible.pdf>
3. Combatting the Opioid Epidemic: The 2019 Budget Fact Sheet
https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FY19-Budget-Fact-Sheet_Combatting-the-Opioid-Epidemic.pdf