

Opioid Epidemic: Who is Responsible?

Doctors - Pharmaceutical Companies -
Attorneys - Insurance Companies?

CAS Virtual Seminar
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Your Panel

- Sara Hunt, Ph.D.
- Mark Pew
- John Ruser, Ph.D.
- Alex Swedlow



Poll #1

Who is most responsible for the opioid epidemic?

- Big Pharma
- Prescribers
- Pharmacists
- Payers / Insurance Companies
- Patients
- Politicians / Policy-makers
- Plaintiff Attorneys
- All of the above



Blame Game

- Big Pharma
- Prescribers
- Pharmacists
- Payers / Insurance Companies
- Patients
- Politicians / Policy-makers
- Plaintiff Attorneys



The Epidemic

- The genesis

- Under-treating pain, Big Opioid Pharma, Fifth Vital Sign, Press-Gainey

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/patient-satisfaction-surveys-need-better-address-pain-management-fighting-opioid>

- The statistics

- 47,852 opioid deaths as of Oct 2019 (131/day)

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

- The evolution

- Rx opioids, street Rx opioids, heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/key-issues/prescription-opioid-misuse/>



The Epidemic



- Baseball Hall of Fame
- Public figure with severe anxiety
- Pitching thru pain introduced him to opioids
- Crashed his plane on 11/7/17 with a muscle relaxer, an opioid, a sleep aid, morphine and an antidepressant in his system



The Epidemic

Dr. Schultz (serving 157 years in prison) prescribed ***one patient*** over 23,000 of the highest potency oxycodone pills in an eight-month period



**More than
100 pills
a day.**

Mallinckrodt, the pharmaceutical company that flooded Florida with hundreds of millions of oxycodone pills, ***paid a relatively small penalty.***



Accountability?

- \$270M in March 2019
- \$85M in June 2019
- \$18B / 18 / 21 + \$1B in Feb 2020
- Bankruptcy!



Accountability?

- Lawsuits by Ohio counties Lake and Trumbull “allege CVS, Walgreens, Rite Aid, Walmart and Giant Eagle helped fuel a national drug crisis that resulted in more than 430,000 deaths since 2000.”

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/suits-accuse-retail-chains-flooding-ohio-painkillers-70933750>

- “Your Guide To The Massive (And Massively Complex) Opioid Litigation

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/10/15/761537367/your-guide-to-the-massive-and-massively-complex-opioid-litigation>



The Epidemic & COVID-19

- No national data
- Anecdotally:
 - Supply chain disruptions
 - Varied rates of overdoses and deaths
 - Warning: prepare for an increase
 - Training in safe administration of naloxone (Narcan)

https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/18/854729610/changes-in-opioid-supply-create-new-risks-as-stay-at-home-rules-ease?fbclid=IwAR1z4H0gTBEg2K8tMUs3ZiXymclWKYhHpkqYYt38P-rnIS1-IN2Sm9fC2BM&mc_cid=b19ea92957&mc_eid=f8af75b3a2



Poll #2

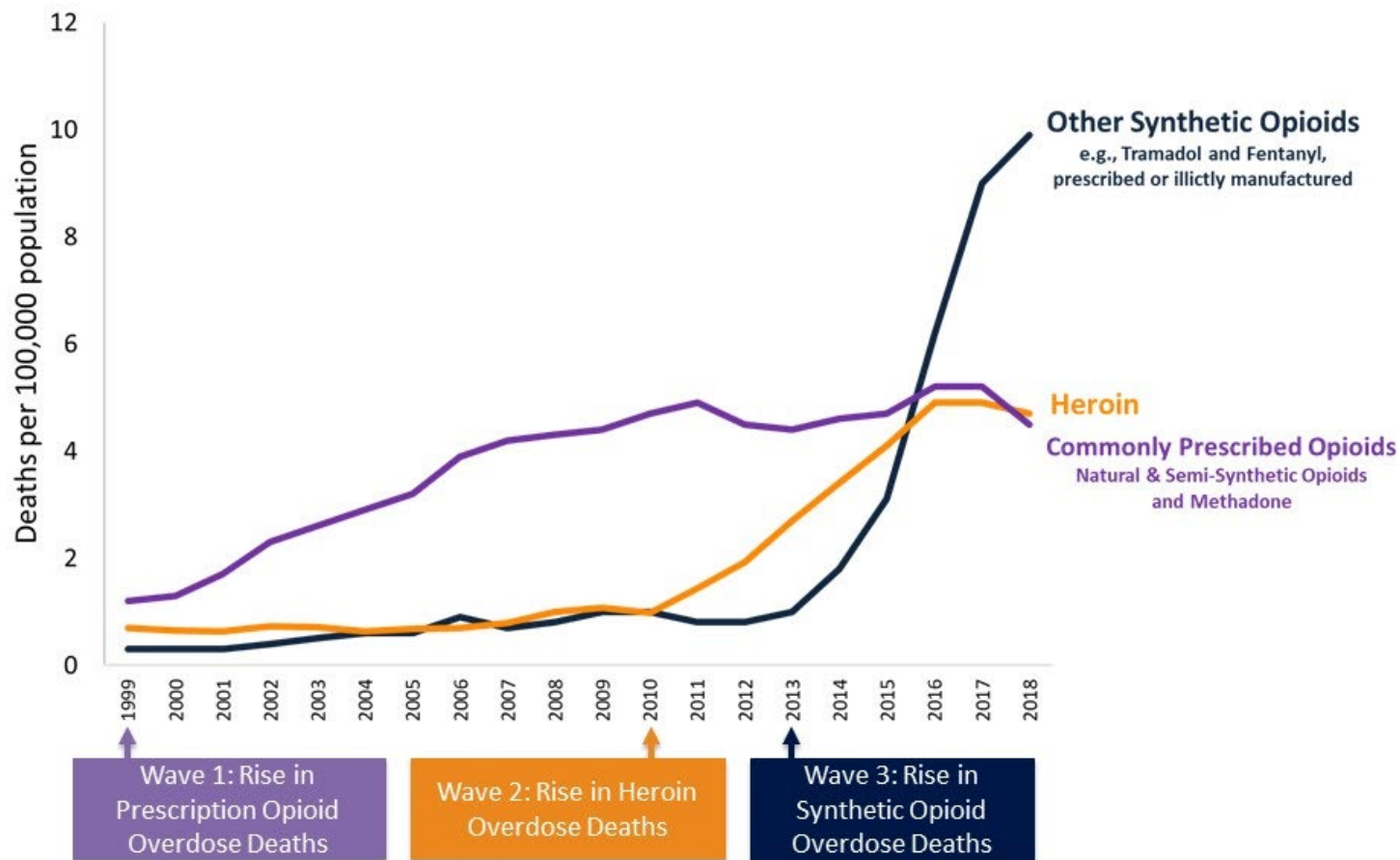
Can you determine the value of a life?

- Yes, it's called an Actuarial Life Table
- Yes, thru litigation for malfeasance
- No, the value of a life is incalculable



The Epidemic

3 Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths

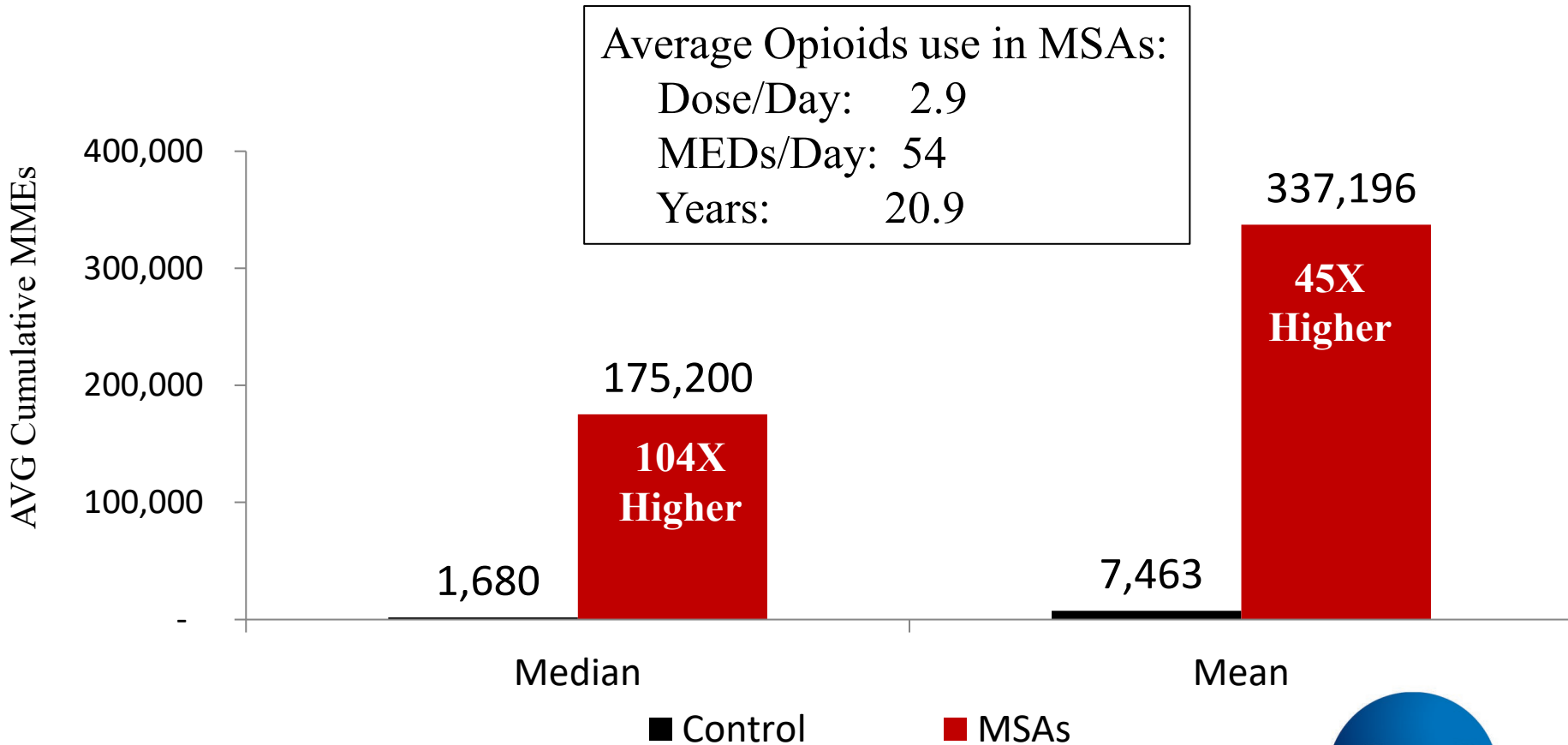


SOURCE: National Vital Statistics System Mortality File.



MSA = OMG MED

Average Morphine Equivalents per MSA/Claim



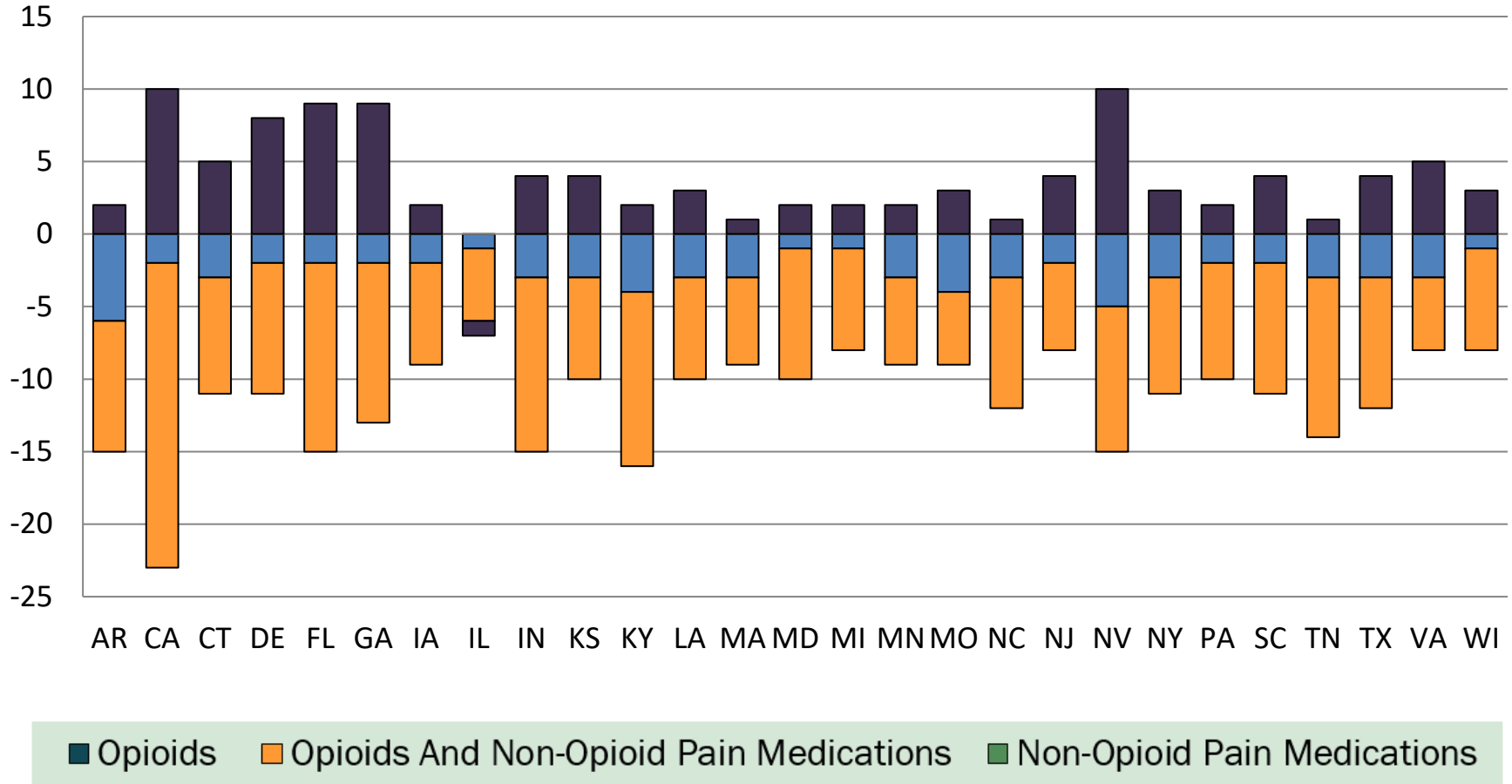
Source: CWCI 2019

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Less Work Comp Opioids

% Point Change From 2012/14 To 2016/18 In The % Of Claims That Had...

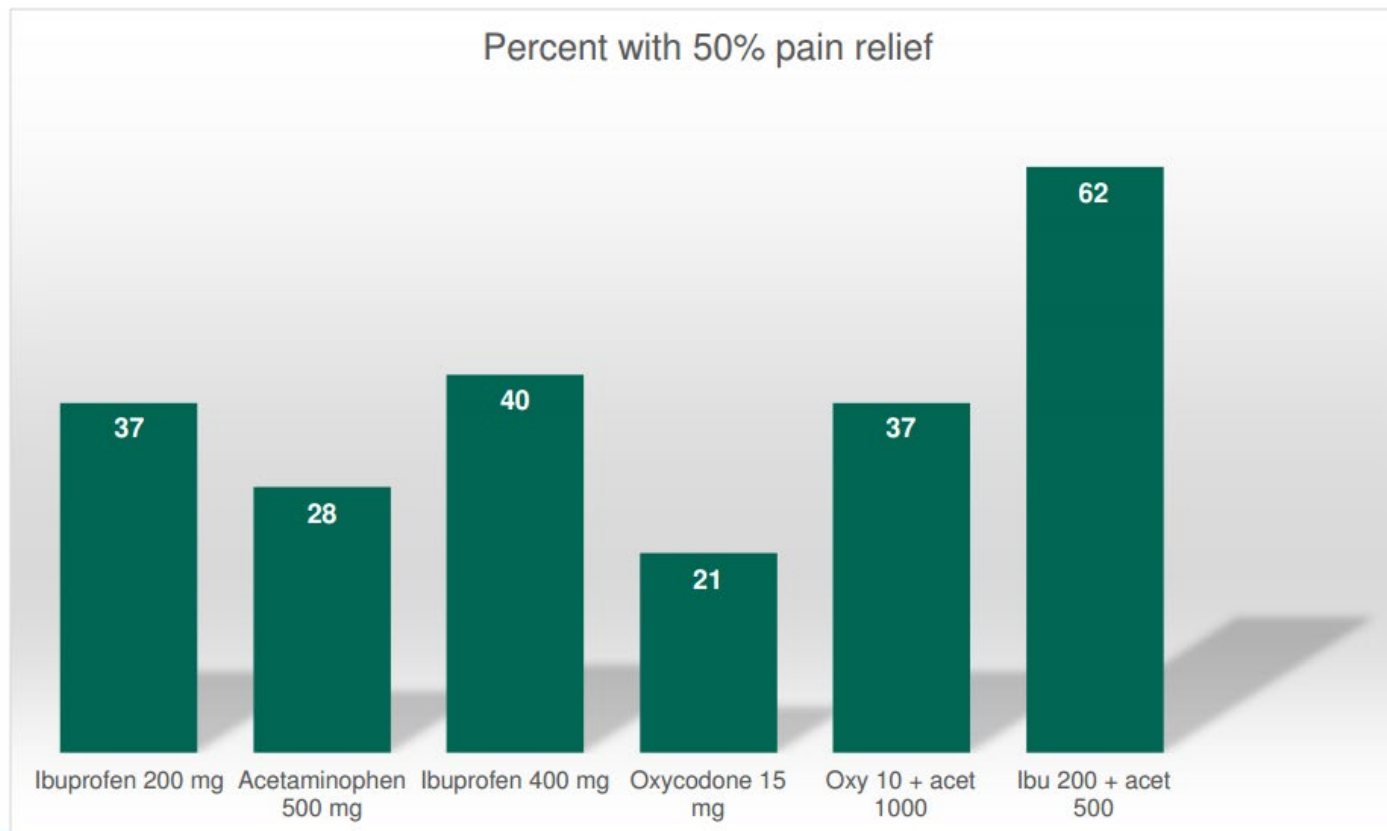


Non-Opioid Pain medication refers to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), anticonvulsants, corticosteroids, topical analgesics, antidepressants, compound drugs, and other analgesics

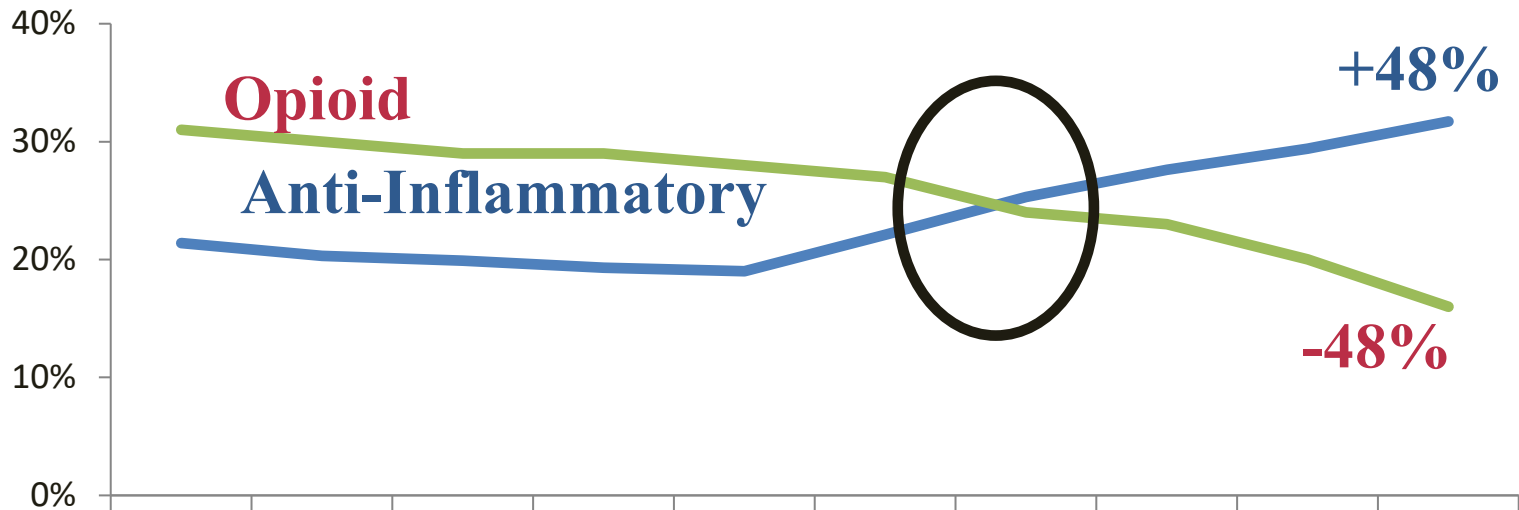


Alternatives

Efficacy of pain medications Acute pain^{26,27,51}



NSAIDs > Opioids



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
— Anti-Inflam	21%	20%	20%	19%	19%	22%	25%	28%	29%	32%
— Opioid	31%	30%	29%	29%	28%	27%	24%	23%	20%	16%

Data from CY 2007 – Dec 2018

Source: CWCI 2019



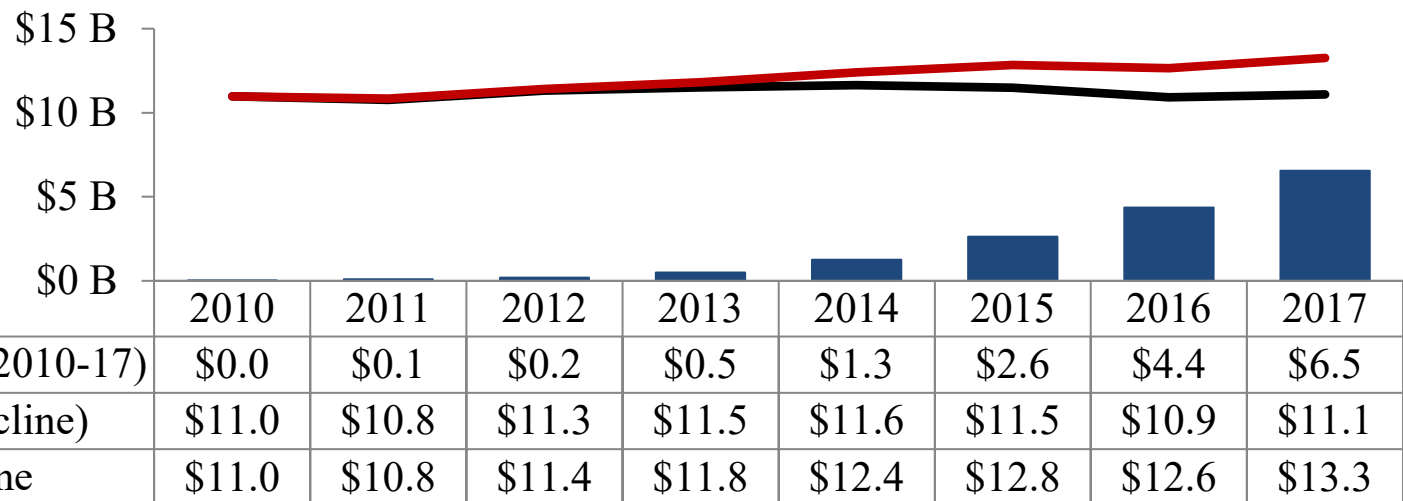
Poll #3

Are NSAIDs a better choice than opioids?

- Yes, many less side effects (e.g. no addiction)
- No, long-term use can cause bleeding ulcers
- Not sure but we're apparently going to find out



Opioids & Costs

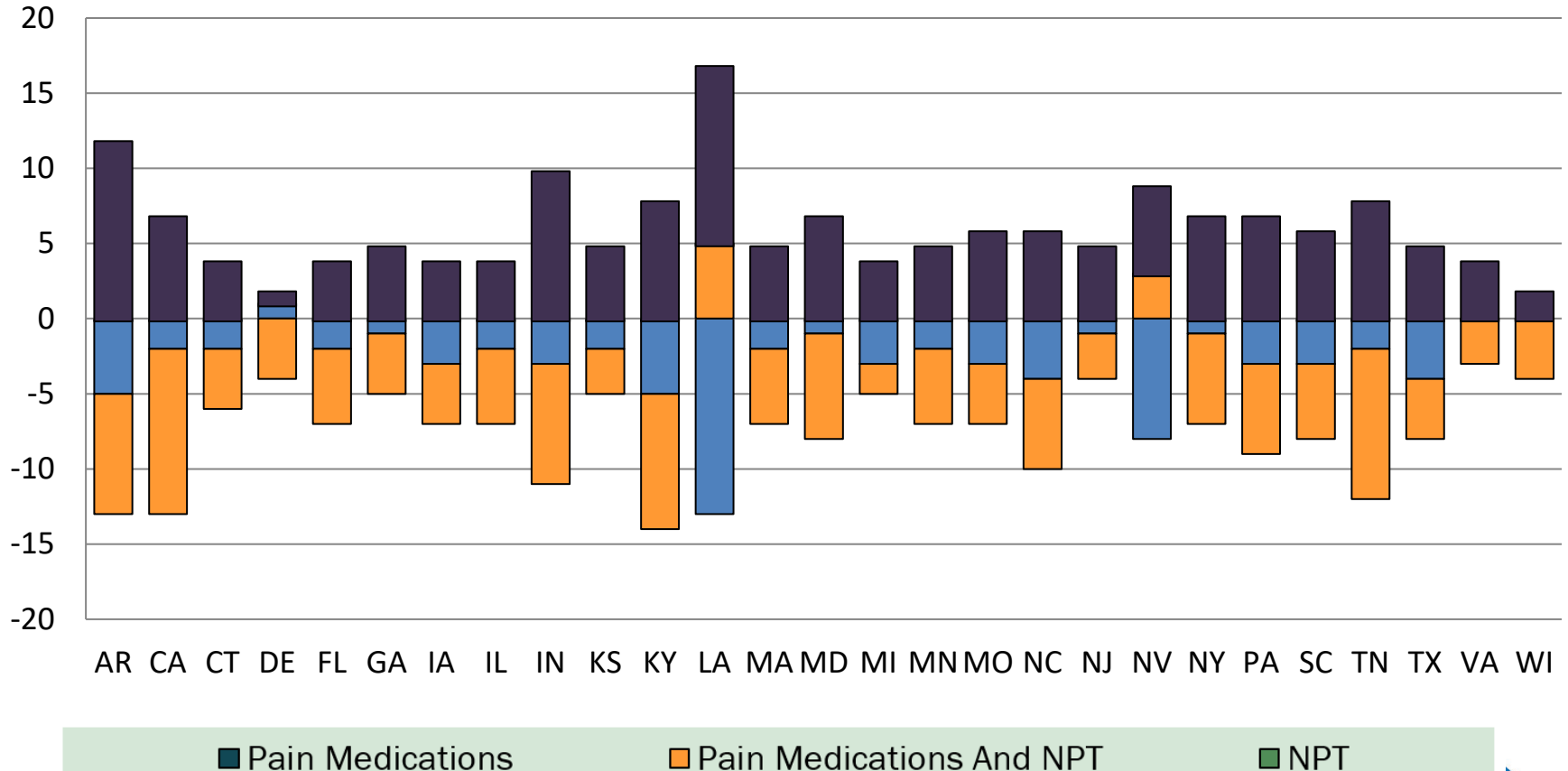


The cumulative systemwide impact of declining opioid use between 2010 and 2017, projected to 10 years of development, is estimated at \$6.5 billion in savings in benefit payments



Towards Non-Pharma

% Point Change From 2012/14 To 2016/18
In The % Of Claims That Had...



NPT (non-pharmacologic treatment) refers to at least one paid visit for physician therapy evaluation, active and passive physical therapy, manipulation, acupuncture, behavioral therapy, or interventional pain management.



The Path Forward

- “Appropriate” (not Zero) Opioids (<http://bit.ly/2iotzLw>)
- Non-Opioid Rx: NSAIDs, gabapentin (<http://bit.ly/2yKMbQQ>)
- Medical (?) marijuana
- Physical therapy, chiropractic treatment
- Acupuncture, dry needling, biofeedback
- Yoga, Tai Chi
- CBT, ACT, MI, mindfulness, virtual therapy
- More activity, better sleep, nutritious diet, proper hydration
- **Engaged, resilient, self-managing patient**

#BioPsychoSocialSpiritual



Poll #4

What is the best choice for treating chronic pain?

- Rx opioids
- Rx non-opioids (e.g. NSAIDs)
- Medical marijuana
- Physical medicine
- Psychotherapy
- Behavior modification
- It depends upon the person



Questions and Discussion





Sara Hunt, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean, UNLV School of Medicine

sara.hunt@unlv.edu

Mark Pew

Senior VP, Product Development & Marketing

Mark.Pew@ThePreferredMedical.com

John W. Ruser, Ph.D.

Workers' Compensation Research Institute

jruser@wcrinet.org

Alex Swedlow

President, California Workers' Compensation Institute

Aswedlow@cwci.org

