



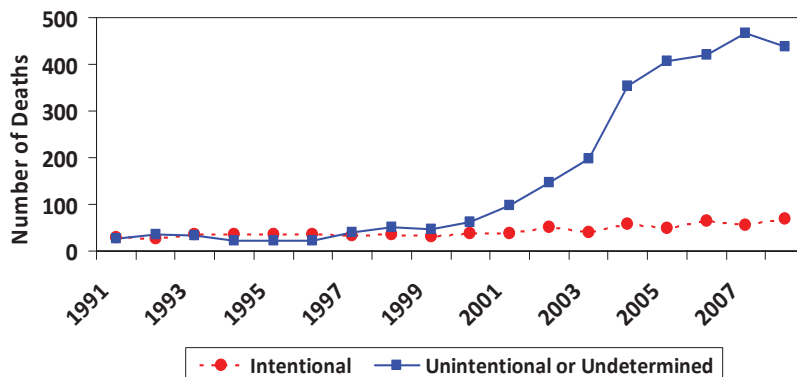
Prescription Drugs

Background

In the 2005-2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Utah ranks fourth in the nation for having the highest reported nonmedical use of painkillers. The information collected in the study shows that the age group that most reported nonmedical use of prescription painkillers in Utah are age 26 and above--a fact that differs greatly from the rest of the nation where this is primarily a problem for those under the age of 25. The Utah Department of Health reported that 317 Utahns died from prescription drug overdose in 2007, with an average age of death being 40 years old. That number is more than twice as high as deaths caused from illegal drugs.

Drug Poisoning Deaths by Manner and Year

Utah 1991-2008



From the Utah Medical Examiner's Office.

Status in Addressing the Issue:

- The Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG) has identified Prescription Drug Overdose as a priority. \$1,629,050 of this grant will be used at the local community level.
- Utah State Office of Education administers and coordinates the statewide implementation of the K-12 Prevention Dimensions substance abuse prevention program.
- The Local Authority's Prevention System implements prevention activities and programs such as PRIME For Life, first offender programs, life skills training and other education programs designed to raise awareness of the dangerousness of abusing prescription drugs and teaching skills on how to avoid drug use.

Quick Facts

- In October 2005, the Health Department convened a workgroup to address deaths due to prescription pain medications in Utah. Three action steps were recommended to prevent further deaths:
 1. Educate health care providers about appropriate use of opiates for pain management
 2. Improve education to patients about appropriate use of opiates for pain management
 3. Educate the public about the risks of adverse outcomes of medical and nonmedical use of opiates.
- The Utah Addiction Center established a physician training to inform physicians regarding the appropriate use of opiates for pain management.
- The Assessment and Referral Services had an on-going pain management study to gather information to assist in the prevention of unintentional deaths.