

The Prescription Drug Epidemic: Current Trends and Policy Solutions

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7/18/2012

Definition of Nonmedical Use of Prescription Drugs

**INDIVIDUALS
WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION**

**INDIVIDUALS
WITH A PRESCRIPTION**

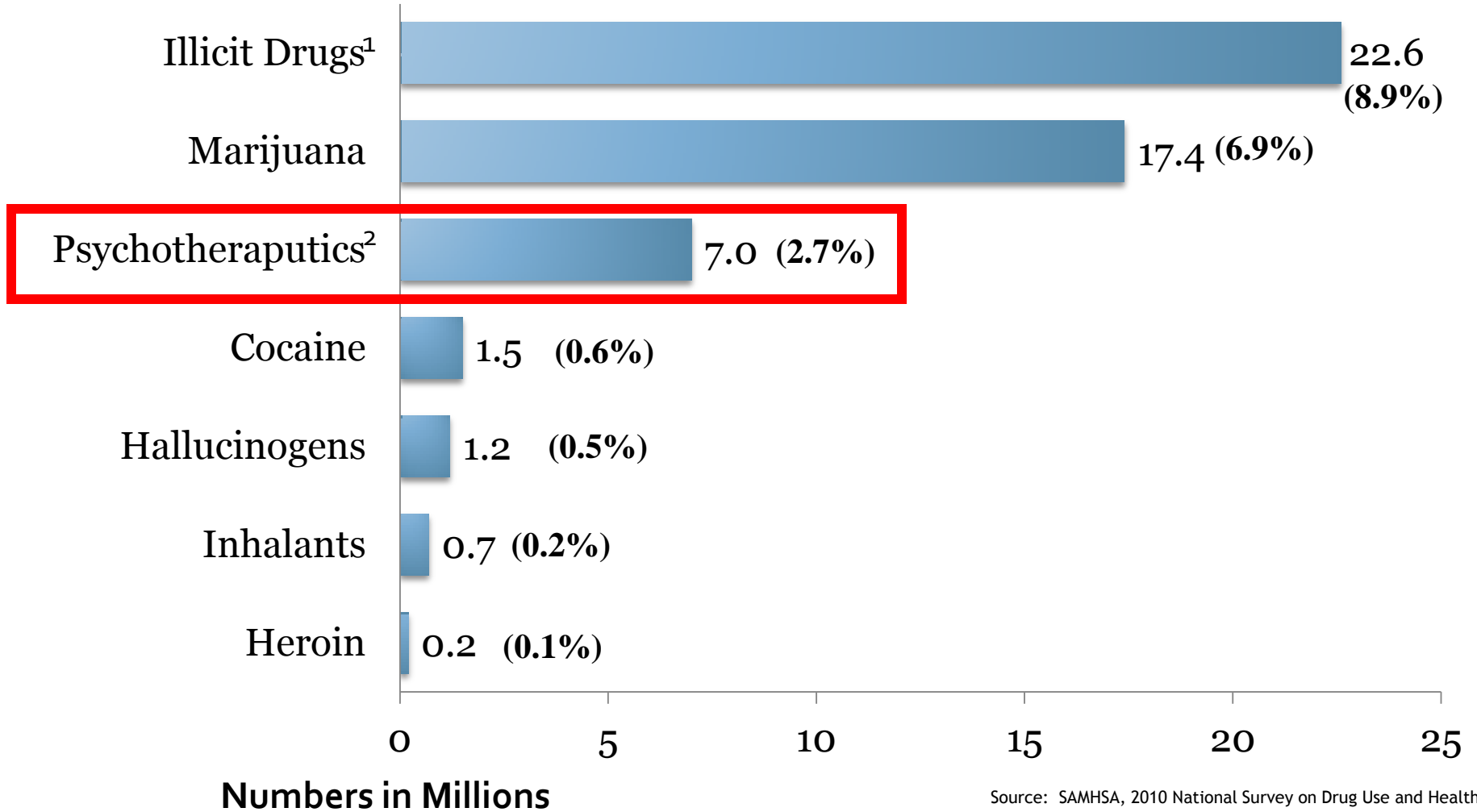
Use the medication
consistent with the doctor's orders

Use the medication
inconsistent with doctor's orders

Use the medication only for the
experience or feeling it caused

Scope of the Problem: All Adults

Prescription Drug Abuse is a Major Problem in the USA



Source: SAMHSA, 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

¹ Illicit Drugs include marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or prescription-type drugs used non-medically.

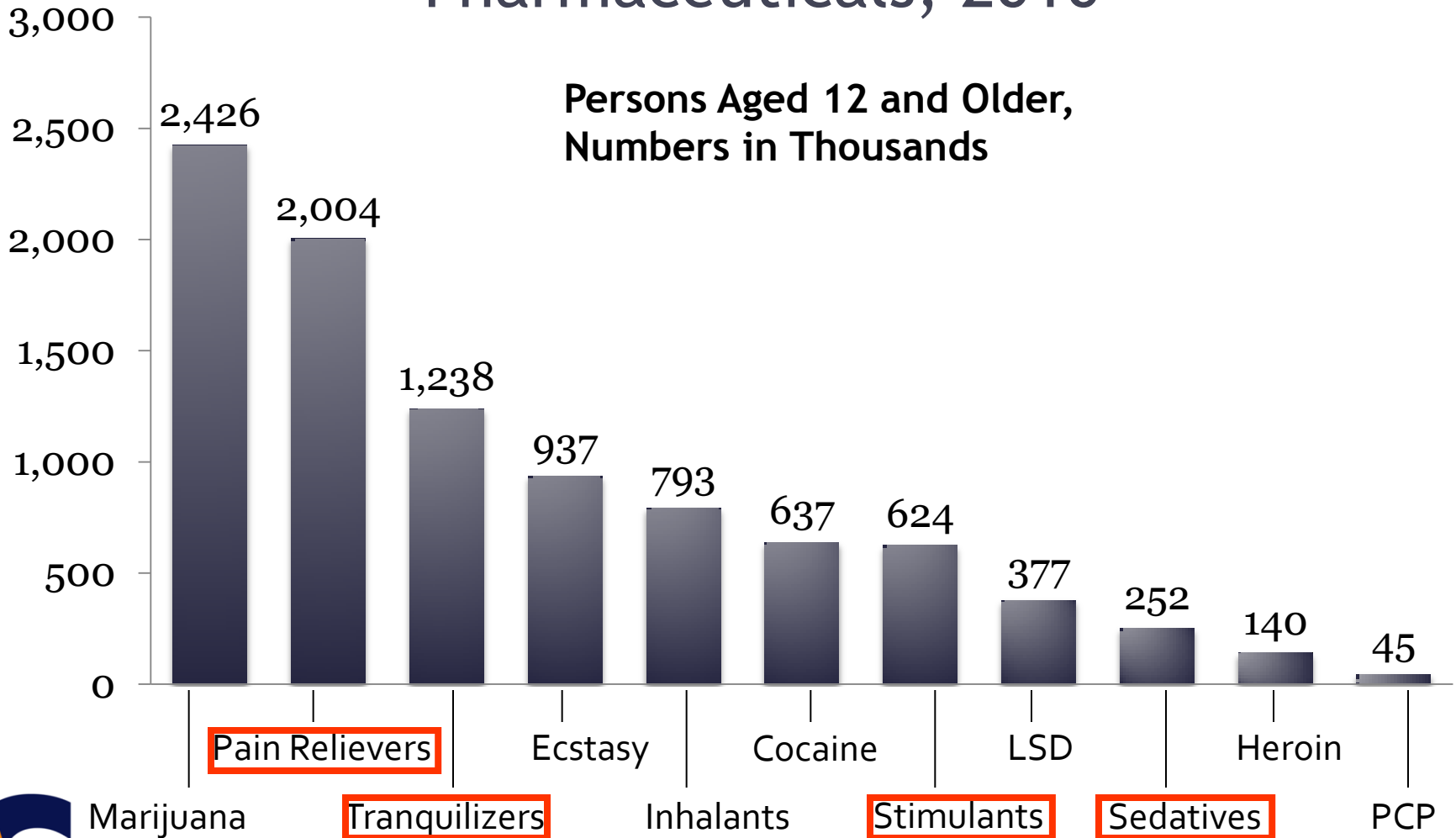
² Psychotherapeutics include the nonmedical use of any prescription-type pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives. Over-the-counter substances are not included.

Prescription Drug Initiation Rates are Just as Alarming

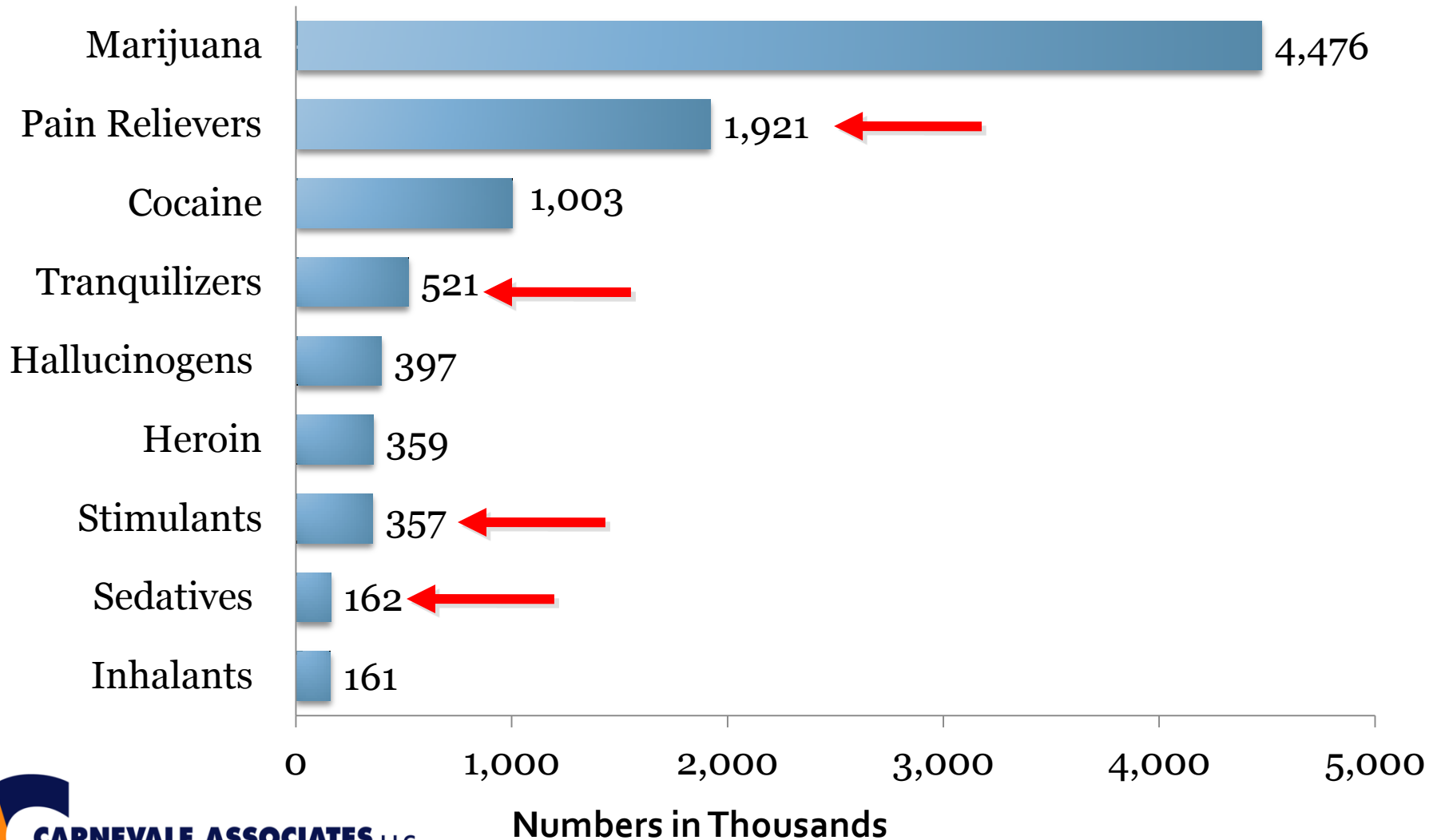
- Every year since 2002, 2.4 million to 2.8 million American abuse prescription drugs for the first time
- On average, there are 7,000 new users of prescription drugs each day in the U.S.
- Prescription pain relievers attract new users at a rate that outpaces all drugs except marijuana.

Source: SAMHSA, 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Large Number of Past Year Initiates of Pharmaceuticals, 2010



Dependence on or Abuse of Specific Illicit Drugs in the Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older: 2010



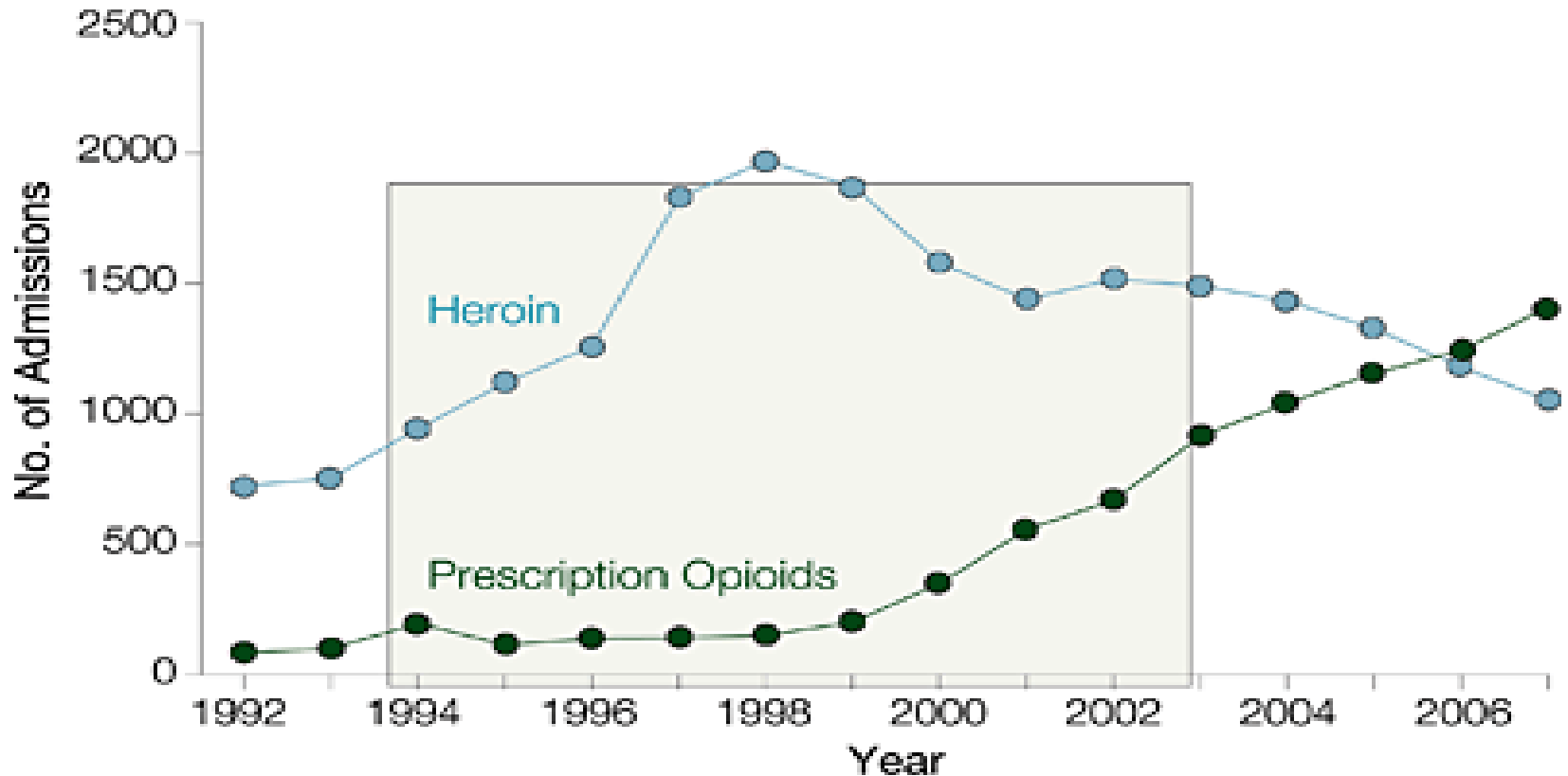
Treatment admissions for prescription drugs are also increasing

- The overall rate of substance abuse treatment admissions among those aged 12 and older in the U.S. has remained nearly the same from 1999 to 2009, but, there has been a dramatic rise (430 percent) in the rate of treatment admissions for the abuse of prescription pain relievers during this period.
- The rate of treatment admissions primarily linked to these drugs rose from 10 per 100,000 in the population in 1999 to 53 per 100,000 population in 2009.

Source: SAMHSA, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) 1999 to 2009, State Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Services

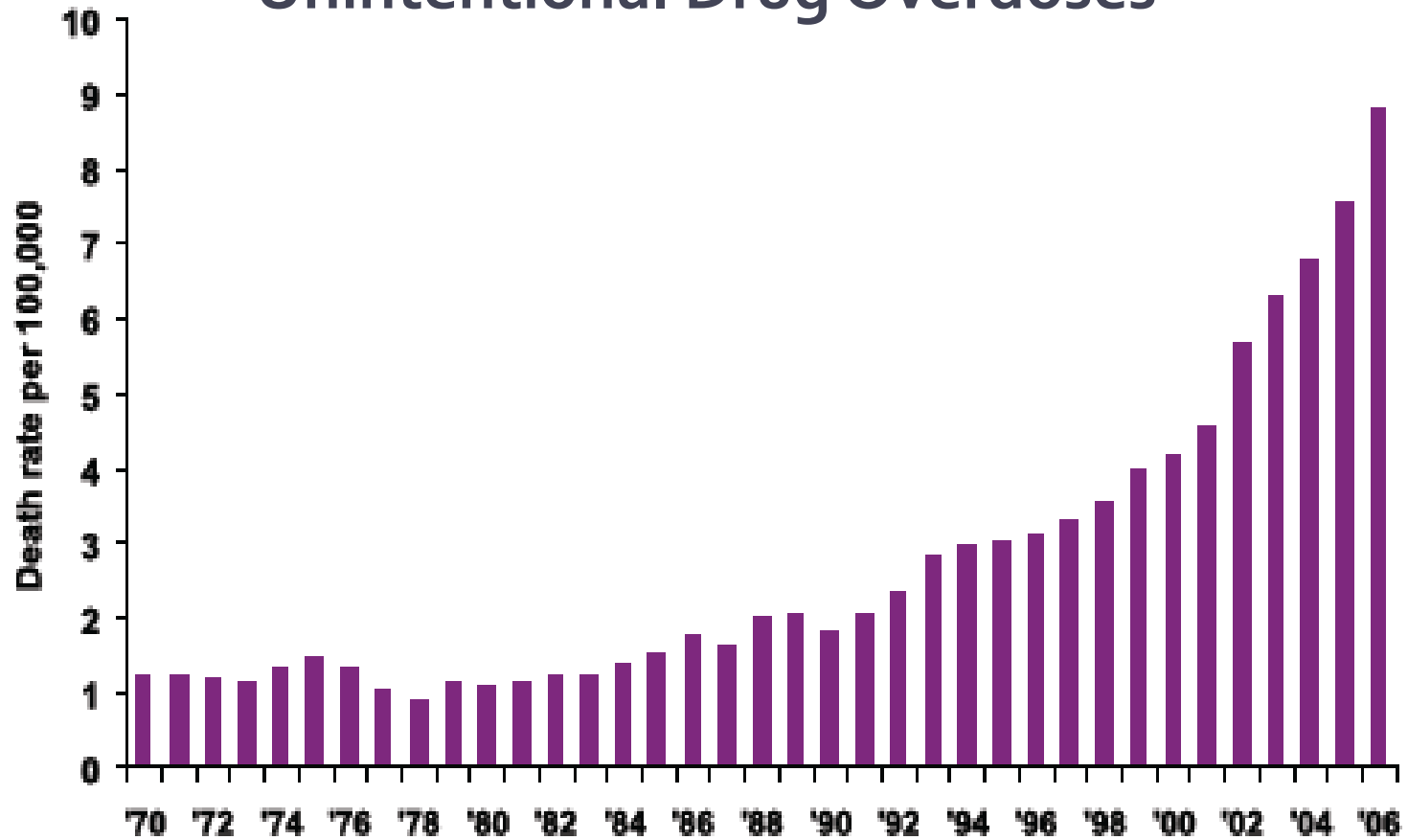
Increasing Treatment for Pharmaceutical Opioids

Opioid Admissions in Adolescents Aged 12 to 17 Years



Source: Subramaniam G. Treatments for adolescents/young adults with opioid use disorder. Presented at: 8th National Institute on Drug Abuse Blending Conference; April 22, 2010; Albuquerque, NM.

DEATHS: Marked Increase in Unintentional Drug Overdoses



Source: CDC, Unintentional Drug Poisoning in the United States,, National Vital Statistics System, 2010

The increase in drug overdose death rates is largely because of prescription opioid painkillers

- In 2008, nearly 15,000 prescription painkiller overdose deaths occurred in the United States.
 - This number is **more than triple** the 4,000 killed in 1999.
- The number of deaths involving prescription painkillers was 1.93 times the number involving cocaine and 5.38 times the number involving heroin.
- Prescription painkillers were involved in **more overdose deaths than heroin and cocaine combined.**
- According to the CDC, **40 Americans die every day from prescription painkiller abuse.**

Consequences of the Epidemic are Apparent in Emergency Rooms

- According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), 1,079,683 Emergency Department (ED) visits involved the misuse of prescription drugs in 2009
 - Represents 25 percent of all drug-related ED visits
- Number of **prescription drug-related ED visits** has **doubled since 2004**.
- Oxycodone-related ED visits **increased 242 percent** since 2004.

Emergency Department Mentions Increasing for Pharmaceuticals, Not for Illicit Drugs in the USA

- Opioid Analgesics increased from 144,600 to 342,648 (137%), 2004 to 2009
- Benzodiazepines increased from 143,526 to 312,931 (118%), 2004 to 2009
- No change in illicit drug reports (1.9 million to 1.9 million overall, non-alcohol illicit 1.0 million to 1.0 million, cocaine 475,425 to 482,188,).

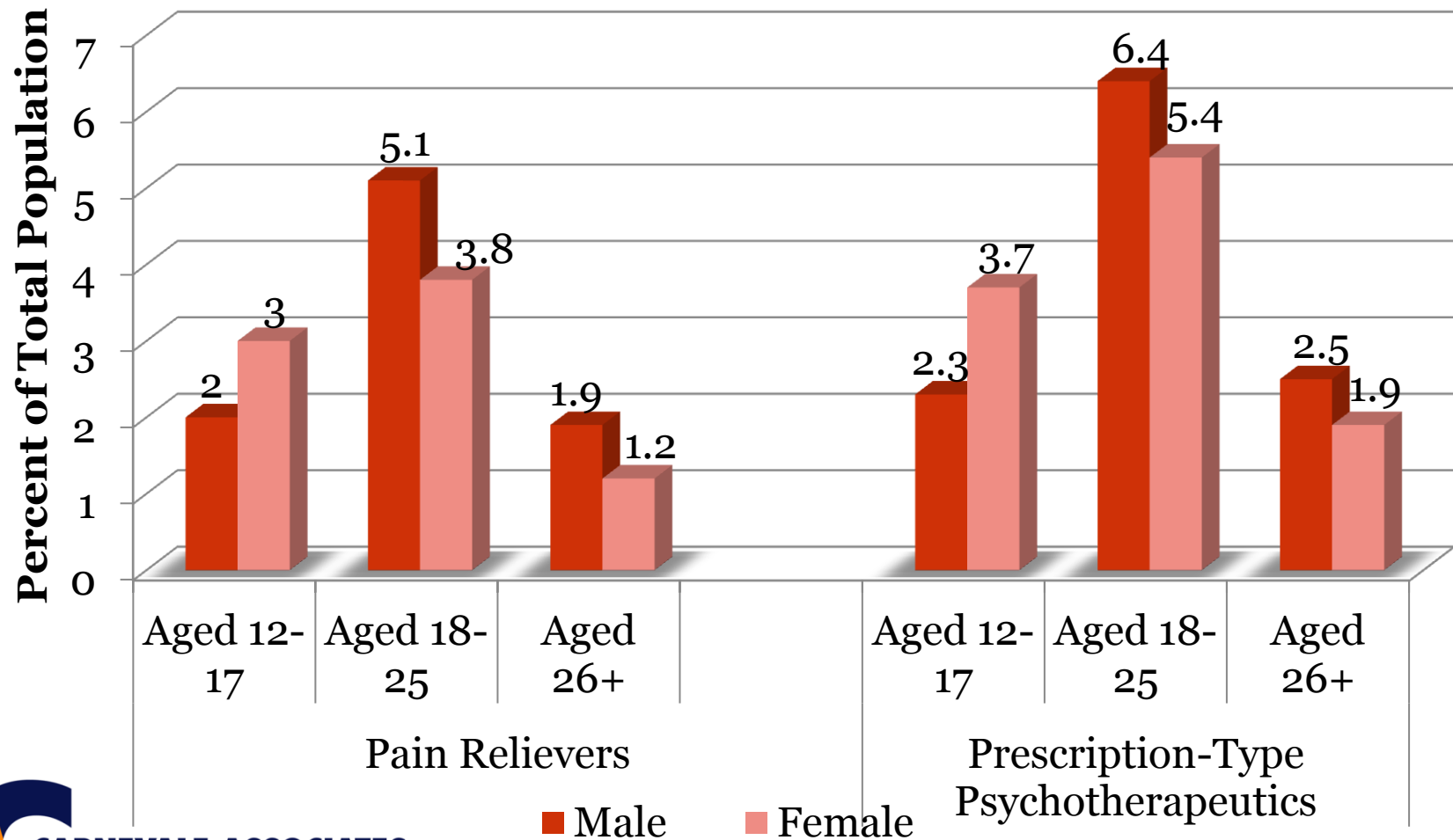
Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Drug Abuse Warning Network, 2011

What is driving these increases?

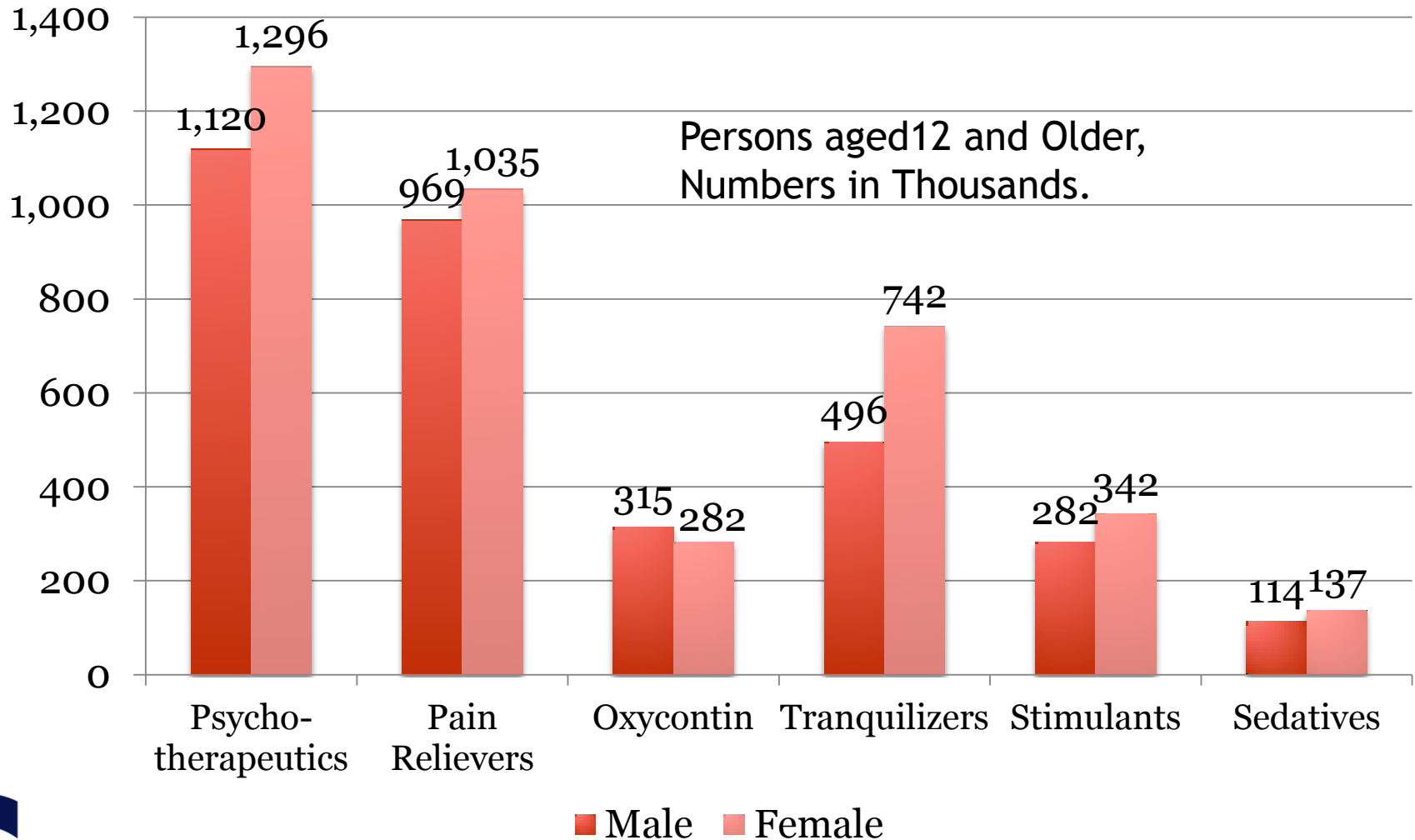
- According to NIDA, the number of prescriptions written for stimulants increased **800 percent** (5 million to 45 million) from 1991 to 2009.
- The number of opioid-specific prescriptions increased **175 percent** (from 75.5 million to 209 million) from 2000 to 2009.
- There are also misperceptions about the safety of prescription drugs among the general public.
 - They are prescribed by a doctor, after all.

Scope of the Problem: Women and Girls

Comparison of Male and Female Pain Reliever and Prescription-Type Psychotherapeutic Drug Use, 2010



For most prescription drug types, there were more female than male initiates in 2010



Female Treatment Admissions for Prescription Drugs

- Females represent **31.9 percent** of all **treatment admissions** for alcohol and other drugs, but represent **46.5 percent** of admissions for **opiates other than heroin**, **48.8 percent** of all admissions for **tranquilizers**, and **58.4 percent** of all admissions for **sedatives**.

Source: SAMHSA, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) 1999 to 2009, State Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Services

Consequences of prescription drug use are being seen in our nation's maternity wards

- According to a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, 13,500 infants a year- **or one infant every hour-is born with opiate drug withdrawal symptoms.**
- These infants often experience seizures, breathing problems, dehydration, feeding problems, and irritability.
- The number of pregnant women using opiate drugs increased fivefold from 2000 to 2009.
- The cost of treating these infants was \$720 million in 2009, or \$53,400 per infant.

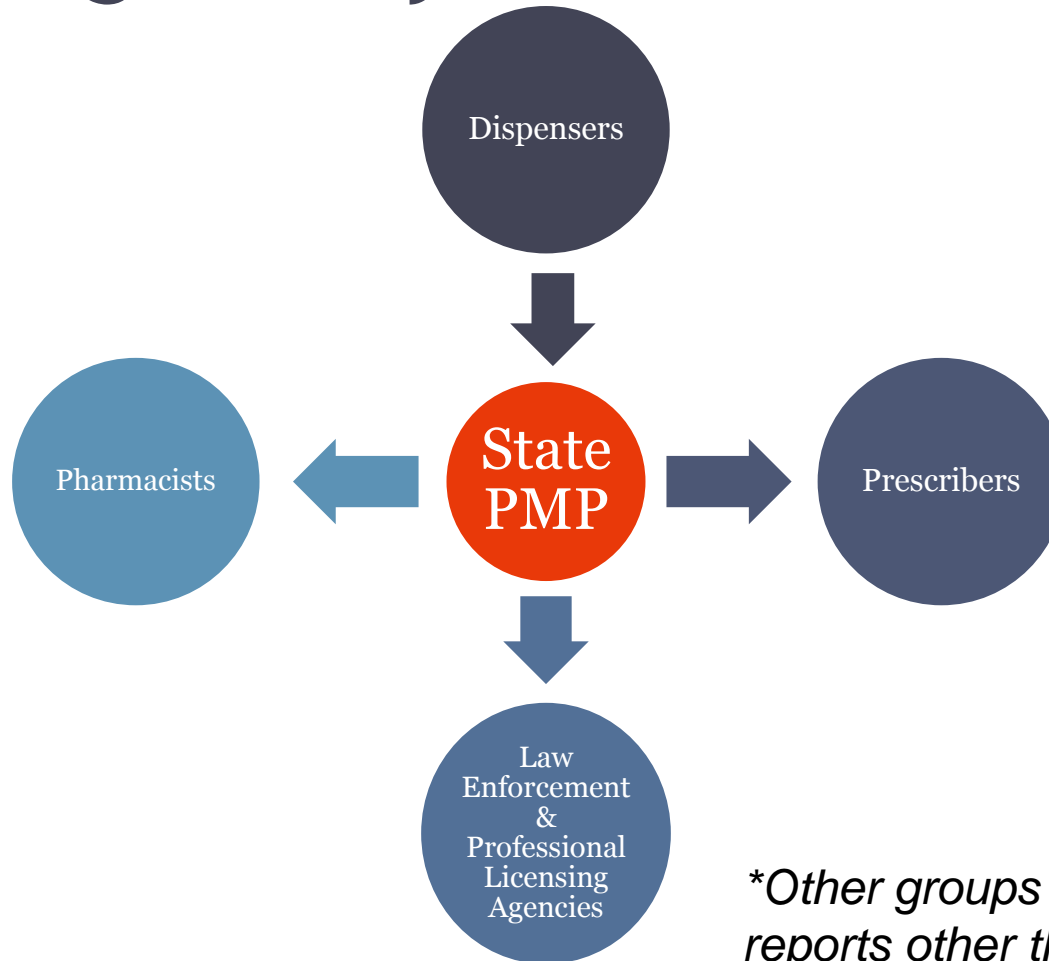
So what is currently being done about the prescription drug epidemic?

2011 ONDCP's Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan

Epidemic: Responding to America's Prescription Drug Abuse Crisis

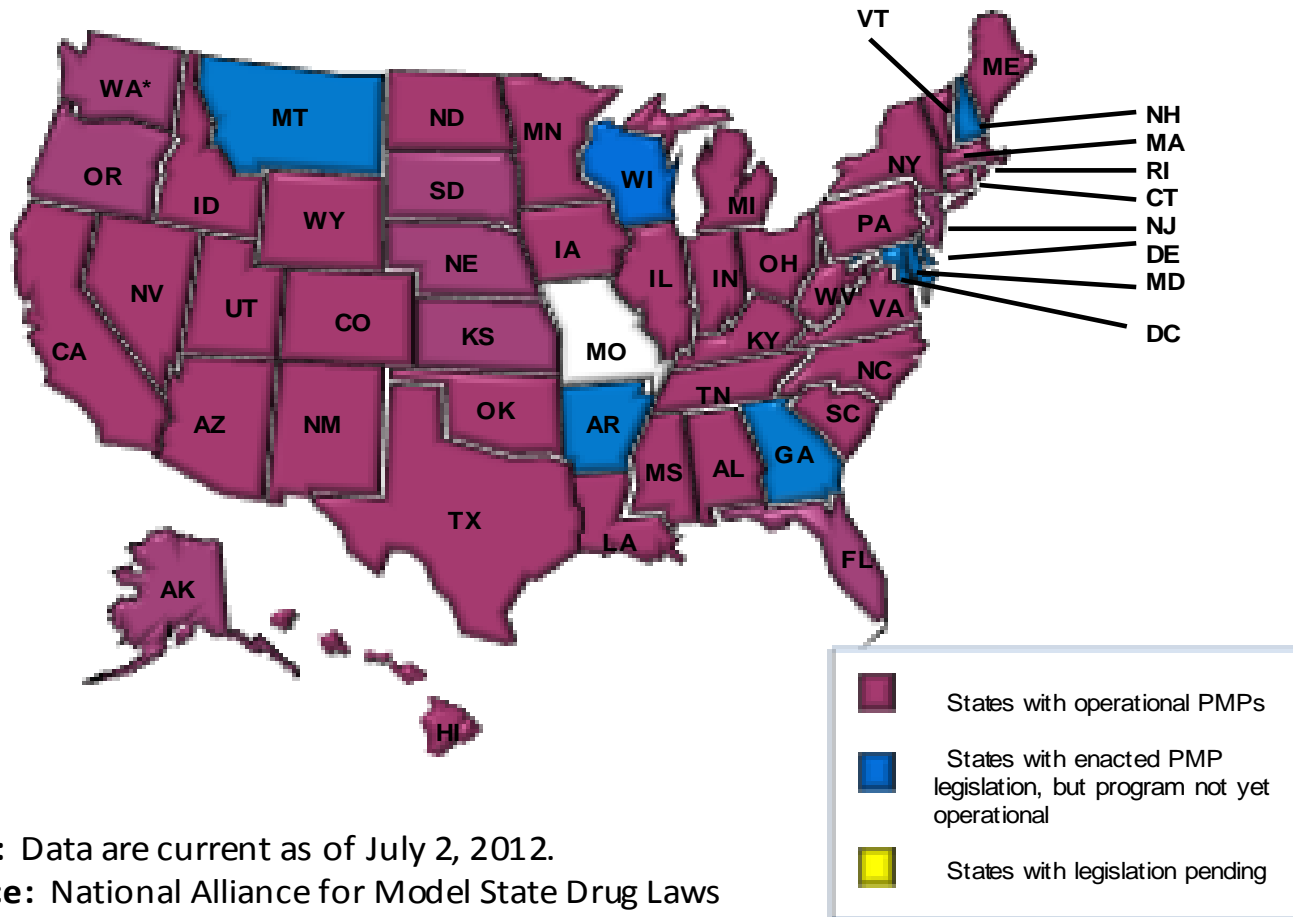
- **Education.** A crucial first step in tackling the problem of prescription drug abuse is to educate parents, youth, and patients about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs while requiring prescribers to receive training in the safe and appropriate use of these drugs.
- **Monitoring.** Implement prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) in every state, and enhance PDMPs to make sure they can share data across states and are used by healthcare providers.
- **Proper Medication Disposal.** Develop convenient and environmentally responsible prescription drug disposal programs to help reduce prescription drug diversion.
- **Enforcement.** Provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to eliminate improper prescribing practices and reduce “pill mills” and “doctor shopping.”

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program System Overview



**Other groups may also receive reports other than those listed.*

The Current Status of State PMPs



Note: Data are current as of July 2, 2012.

Source: National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws

Opioid Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS)

- Announced by the Food and Drug Administration for long-acting and extended release opioids in April 2011.
- Five elements:
 - Medication Guide
 - Communication Plan
 - Elements to Assure Safe Use
 - Implementation System
 - Timetable for Submission of Assessments
- Training is currently voluntary; may become mandatory for DEA licensing or renewal.

Questions and Discussion