

## Use of Prescribed Opioids Down Nearly 12 Percent Over 12 Months Among Cigna Customers

BLOOMFIELD, Conn., 06 April, 2017 - Since announcing its [commitment to combat](#) the nation's opioid epidemic last year, Cigna (NYSE: CI) has made significant progress toward reaching its goal to reduce opioid use among its customers with the help of health care providers. Within the last 12 months, Cigna customers' use of prescribed opioids has declined nearly 12 percent – about halfway to achieving the company's goal of 25 percent reduction by 2019.

While Cigna has adopted a multi-pronged response to the epidemic that includes multiple stakeholder groups, the key to this initial progress has been Cigna's work with doctors, especially those that participate in its Cigna Collaborative Care arrangements.

To date, 158 medical groups participating in Cigna Collaborative Care, representing nearly 62,000 doctors, have signed Cigna's [pledge](#) to reduce opioid prescribing and to treat opioid use disorder as a chronic condition.

“The opioid epidemic is far too big for any one person or organization to fight alone. Success will require the efforts of multiple stakeholders,” said Cigna President and CEO David Cordani. “We commend those who have joined the battle with us. Our collective steps are making a notable difference in the lives of our customers and their families. The decline in opioid use that we have seen in just one year is encouraging and reinforces how much more we can accomplish as we continue to work together.”

Cigna assists doctors in preventing, recognizing and treating opioid misuse by:

- Analyzing integrated claims data across pharmacy and medical benefits to detect opioid use patterns that suggest possible misuse by individuals, and then notifying their health care providers. This helps identify individuals with substance use disorders more quickly so they can get the help they need.
- Alerting doctors when their opioid prescribing patterns are not consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [guidelines](#) that include opioid selection, dosage, and duration.
- Establishing a database of opioid quality improvement initiatives for doctors that can help them determine next steps for improving patient care, including referrals into chronic pain management or substance use disorder treatment programs.

Cigna is also implementing additional customer safety measures in support of the CDC guidelines. Effective July 1, most new prescriptions for a long-acting opioid that are not being used as part of treatment for cancer or sickle cell disease, or for hospice care, will be subject to prior authorization, and most new prescriptions for a short-acting opioid will be subject to quantity limits. According to the CDC, drug overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death in the United States. Of the [overdose deaths](#) that occurred in 2015, 63 percent involved an opioid.

“As a country, we have developed an overreliance on opioids to manage pain. If we're going to break the opioid epidemic, we need to change that culture,” Cordani said. “Helping doctors become more aware of their own prescribing patterns and the effectiveness of non-narcotic alternatives for pain management is key to helping our customers have better health outcomes. For those who have become dependent on opioids, we need to treat them as compassionately as we would someone suffering from any other chronic disease and help them with recovery.”

Cigna continues to work closely with Shatterproof, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the devastation that addiction causes to families and the stigma associated with this disease. A Cigna Foundation grant helped the organization launch a comprehensive [online portal](#) earlier this year. It has the most up-to-date, evidence-based information on how to understand, prevent, intervene, treat, and recover from substance use disorders.

## **About Cigna**

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