

THE TRAGIC TOLL OF OPIOID ABUSE IN AMERICA

“ The misuse of and addiction to opioids ... is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare.”

— National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institute on Drug Abuse

With increased awareness and better prescribing practices, overall prescribing rates peaked in 2012 and have declined each year since to a 12-year low in 2017.³ However, there is still cause for concern: as of 2017, **the rate and number of overdose deaths involving opioids continues to increase.**⁴

80%

Heroin users who first misused prescription opioids²

1.7 million

People who suffered from substance use disorders related to prescription opioids²

Age-adjusted drug overdose deaths involving opioids, 2016 vs. 2017⁴

Any opioid: **47,600 — up 12.7%**

Synthetic opioids other than methadone: **28,466 — up 46.6%**

Total increase: **67.8% — up from 66.4%**

Opioid Claims by the Numbers, 2009-2018

Increased Indemnity Payments and Defense Costs[†]

AVERAGE INDEMNITY PAYMENT

PAYMENT INCREASED



FROM

\$240,158 TO \$287,183

AVERAGE COST TO DEFEND THESE CLAIMS



COST ROSE

13%



FROM

\$64,138 TO \$69,972

Top Primary Allegations and Specialties[†]

TOP PRIMARY ALLEGATIONS

Procedure **47%**

Medication Error **40%**

Administrative **33%**

TOP MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

Internal Medicine **49%**

Anesthesiology **45%**

Family Medicine **43%**

[†]Special data request provided by MPL Association Data Sharing Project closed claims database. Copyright 2019, MPL Association.