

Pain Parity for South Dakota

Preventing Opioid Use Disorder Before It Begins



Pain is one of the most common reasons people visit their doctor.

Each year, nearly 80 million Americansⁱ seek treatment to manage acute pain symptoms and opioids are often prescribed as a solution. While they can be effective, they can also pose significant health risks and increase chances of opioid dependency.ⁱⁱ

But breakthroughs in pain medication are enabling patients to have a choice in their pain management. Amidst the ongoing opioid epidemic, it is critical that patients have access to the treatments they want and need to address their pain.



Need for increased access to all pain treatment options

- Within one year of receiving an opioid medication to manage acute pain, approximately 85,000 Americans were diagnosed with an opioid use disorder.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Prescribing rates have fallen, but opioid use disorders and overdoses remain high. In 2023, South Dakota reported:
 - More than 100 opioid-overdose related emergency room visits^{iv}
 - Nearly 50 opioid overdose deaths, 51% of all drug overdose deaths^v
 - 35.8 opioid prescriptions per 100 people^{vi}
 - 0.3 naloxone doses distributed per 100 people^{vi}
- Furthermore, in South Dakota, opioid use disorder cost Medicaid over \$13.3 million in excess costs in 2022.^{vii}



Pain parity legislation for equal access to pain treatment options

Across the country, states are introducing legislation to expand access to non-opioid treatments and therapies. These policy efforts, often referred to as “pain parity” legislation, address the health insurance barriers many patients face when trying to access non-opioid treatment options. Pain parity legislation ensures patients are not disadvantaged when accessing non-opioid options by:

- Prohibiting the use of utilization controls such as prior authorization and step therapy
- Equalizing cost-sharing for the non-opioid prescription drug and the opioid prescription drug



Pain parity legislation in South Dakota

In South Dakota there is important legislation focused on pain parity to help patients and families.

H.B. 1085

State Representative Brian Mulder (R-11) introduced H.B. 1085, legislation that aims to increase access to non-opioid treatment options by:

- Prohibiting South Dakota insurers from denying coverage of a prescribed non-opioid medication in favor of an opioid
- Barring insurers from imposing stricter utilization controls or higher cost-sharing for non-opioid drugs than for clinically appropriate opioid or narcotic drugs

Contact your representative to let them know South Dakota needs pain parity and help prevent addiction before it begins.

<https://sdlegislature.gov/>

Visit www.families-network.org to learn more about Take Control of Pain and the state of pain parity across the U.S.

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iv. Alabama.gov 2025. Drug Abuse, Emergency Room. <https://druguse.alabama.gov/emergencyroom.html>
v. KFF. 2023. Opioid Overdose Deaths and Opioid Overdose Deaths as a Percent of All Drug Overdose Deaths. <https://www.kff.org/mental-health/state-indicator/opioid-overdose-deaths/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colld%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>
vi. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2024. Opioid Dispensing Rate Maps. <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/data-research/facts-stats/opioid-dispensing-rate-maps.html>
vii. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2024. Naloxone Dispensing Rate Maps. <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/data-research/facts-stats/naloxone-dispensing-rate-maps.html>
viii. Health Management Associates. 2025. Opioid Use Disorder in the Medicaid Fee-For-Service Program Economic Analysis. <https://www.healthmanagement.com/wp-content/uploads/Opioid-Use-Disorder-Economic-Impact-on-Medicaid-Program-073125.pdf>

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