



April 2025 | OEI-02-24-00430

Fewer than One in Five Medicare Enrollees Received Medication to Treat Their Opioid Use Disorder

Why OIG Did This Review

- Combatting the overdose crisis continues to be a National priority.
- In alignment with the mission of the Department of Health and Human Services to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans, [CMS](#) plays an important role in ensuring Medicare enrollees have access to medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder and opioid overdose-reversal drugs.
- This report provides data to help CMS and other decision makers target efforts to further combat the overdose crisis.

What OIG Found

- Opioid **overdoses** among Medicare enrollees **increased slightly** in 2023 to 53,000.
- With the buprenorphine waiver repealed, **more providers ordered buprenorphine** for Medicare enrollees in 2023 than in 2022.
- Despite the increase in the number of providers ordering buprenorphine, **fewer than one in five** Medicare enrollees received any **medication to treat their opioid use disorder**.
- **Differences persist** among enrollees receiving **medication** for their opioid use disorder, including by State; three States—Florida, Texas, and Nevada—had particularly low percentages of enrollees receiving medication.
- More than 750,000 Medicare enrollees received opioid **overdose-reversal drugs** through Part D in 2023, a **record high**. Virtually all received **naloxone**.
- However, with the most commonly dispensed form of **naloxone now available over the counter**, Medicare enrollees are losing Part D coverage of this form of naloxone, which could lead to **higher out-of-pocket costs**.

What OIG Concludes

These findings show a continued need for CMS to work to ensure access to both medications for opioid use disorder and opioid overdose-reversal drugs. OIG encourages CMS to implement recommendations we previously made related to these topics.