

Prescription drug abuse: America's fastest growing drug problem

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Harden begins by highlighting several devastating statistics regarding prescription drug abuse. Prescription drugs are quickly surpassing illicit drugs as the cause of emergency department visits and deaths. These statistics bring rise to questions regarding accessibility of prescription drugs and preventative measures. The result is a multi-pronged attack focusing on education, prescription drug monitoring programs, proper medication disposal and enforcement. Striking the right balance of strategies will ensure the critical availability of these medications while preventing/reducing diversion and abuse. Throughout, the presentation makes the case for the merging of Public Health and Public Safety Strategies because success will come from coordination and collaboration at the Federal, state, local, and tribal levels. By looking at the prescription drug problem, one might gain insight on how to deal with illicit drug use.

Biography

John Harden is the Executive Director of the UF&Shands Florida Recovery Center (FRC). He is on faculty in the College of Medicine, where he serves as a Senior Resident Fellow of the UF Drug Policy Institute in the Division of Addiction Medicine. FRC is a nationally renowned treatment program specializing in the treatment of physicians and other professionals. With 25 years of clinical experience in addiction and related disorders, He remains active in clinical practice utilizing a systems approach to affect change and recovery.

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