

# Opioid Abuse and Mental Health Issues are Among the Consequences of COVID-19

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## Introduction

As the long-term effects of the COVID-19 epidemic become clearer, opioid abuse and mental health disorders may emerge as two of the most serious.

According to a study, in USA one out of every five persons suffers from mental illness each year, over half of Americans – 47 percent – said the pandemic had a negative influence on their mental health in March of this year [1]. At the same time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), deaths from opioid overdoses reached a new high of 92,000 for the 12-month period ending in October 2020 [2].

## Two topics, frequently connected

Approximately half of those who have a substance use disorder also have a co-occurring mental health illness, and vice versa [3]. The causes for this are numerous. Some people, for example, self-medicate if they can't get the medical treatment and medications they need, while others suffer mental health problems as a result of their opioid addiction.

Experts think the pandemic's stress, loneliness, and anxiety all contributed to the rise in opiate addiction [4]. The CDC stated in June 2020, still early in the pandemic, that 13% of Americans had turned to or escalated their substance use as a coping mechanism [5].

## How to help

Despite the fact that we are moving toward a more normal state of affairs, those suffering from mental health and drug misuse disorders will continue to require assistance. This will necessitate a concerted, coordinated approach that focuses on recognising, treating, and supporting mental health disorders while also addressing the nation's opioid pandemic. Despite the fact that we are moving toward a more

normal state of affairs, those suffering from mental health and drug misuse disorders will continue to require assistance. This will necessitate a concerted, coordinated approach that focuses on recognising, treating, and supporting mental health disorders while also addressing the nation's opioid pandemic [6].

Plan sponsors can act proactively by using programmes that provide prediction models for the growth of anxiety, depression, and sleeplessness, as well as an array of tailored support that can be accessed how and when their members desire. Sponsors can take steps to reduce the risk of misuse when members have a medical need for a new opioid prescription by limiting the initial supply, providing education and resources on how to dispose of excess pills, and communicating with prescribers about issues like dangerous drug interactions and potential therapy duplications [6].

These obstacles are formidable when faced alone; however, with more assistance and the right tools, persons battling with substance misuse and mental health issues can have a better future.

## What expert help

Experts help patients and payers better recognise, treat, and support mental and behavioural health disorders by giving access to professional assistance and support for anxiety, depression, and sleeplessness.

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