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The Opinion Pages | LETTERS

Steps We Can Take to Prevent Opioid Abuse

MARCH 3, 2016

To the Editor:

Re “[Governors Will Create Plan to Curb Opioid Use](#)” (news article, Feb. 22):

The alarming rise in prescription drug abuse, particularly opioid abuse, is attracting increased attention from public officials and dominated discussions at the recent National Governors Association meeting. The epidemic in drug overdose deaths has led to calls for new treatment protocols, limits on prescriptions and expansion of treatment services.

Also needed is a significant expansion of prevention efforts. Over 30 years of rigorous scientific [research](#) has identified a growing number of prevention approaches that are effective, produce lasting results and can save taxpayers a good deal of money.

These include school programs, such as Life Skills Training, that teach students personal coping skills, social skills and drug-resistance skills; family programs, such as Strengthening Families, that improve family communications, problem-solving and perspective-taking skills; and community programs, such as Communities That Care, that mobilize communities to use proven prevention programs matched to community needs.

These and other effective prevention programs can dramatically cut drug abuse, delinquency, aggression and violence. Let’s stop prescription opioid abuse before it begins. Now is the time to unleash the power of prevention.

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