

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Begins Work on Opioid Use Disorder Prevention

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 13, 2018 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted for public comment a draft research plan on preventing opioid use disorder, with a focus on interventions to prevent initiation or minimize use of opioids. This is the first time that the Task Force is reviewing the evidence specifically related to prevention of prescription and illicit opioid use disorder. This is a critical step toward issuing a recommendation statement on this urgent health issue.

An epidemic of prescription and illicit opioid misuse now afflicts the United States. In 2017, an estimated 2.1 million persons age 12 years and older had an opioid use disorder, and opioid use was involved in nearly two-thirds of more than 70,000 fatal drug overdoses. Prevention of unnecessary opioid use, opioid misuse, and opioid use disorder in primary care settings is essential to an effective response to this crisis.

In its review, the Task Force will look for evidence on strategies for persons not currently using opioids that can be implemented in or referred from primary care settings. The Task Force will look for interventions that engage patients or providers.

The process requires conduct of an extensive review of published health literature by an independent research team, seeking input from additional topic experts, and developing a draft recommendation statement based on this evidence. Today the Task Force invites the public to provide comments on the draft research plan that, once finalized, will guide this literature review.

The Task Force's draft research plan has been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from December 13, 2018 to January 16, 2019 at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/tfcomment.htm. To receive alerts about this and other Task Force topics, sign up for the [USPSTF email list](#). Alerts will be sent when draft and final materials are posted or published.

In addition to this new topic, the Task Force is currently updating its 2008 recommendation statement on screening for illicit drug use and nonmedical use of prescription drugs among adolescents and adults, including pregnant and postpartum women. This is found at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendation statements about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Contact: USPSTF Media Coordinator at Newsroom@USPSTF.net / (202) 572-2044