

Fact Sheet on Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers in the “Opioid Crisis”

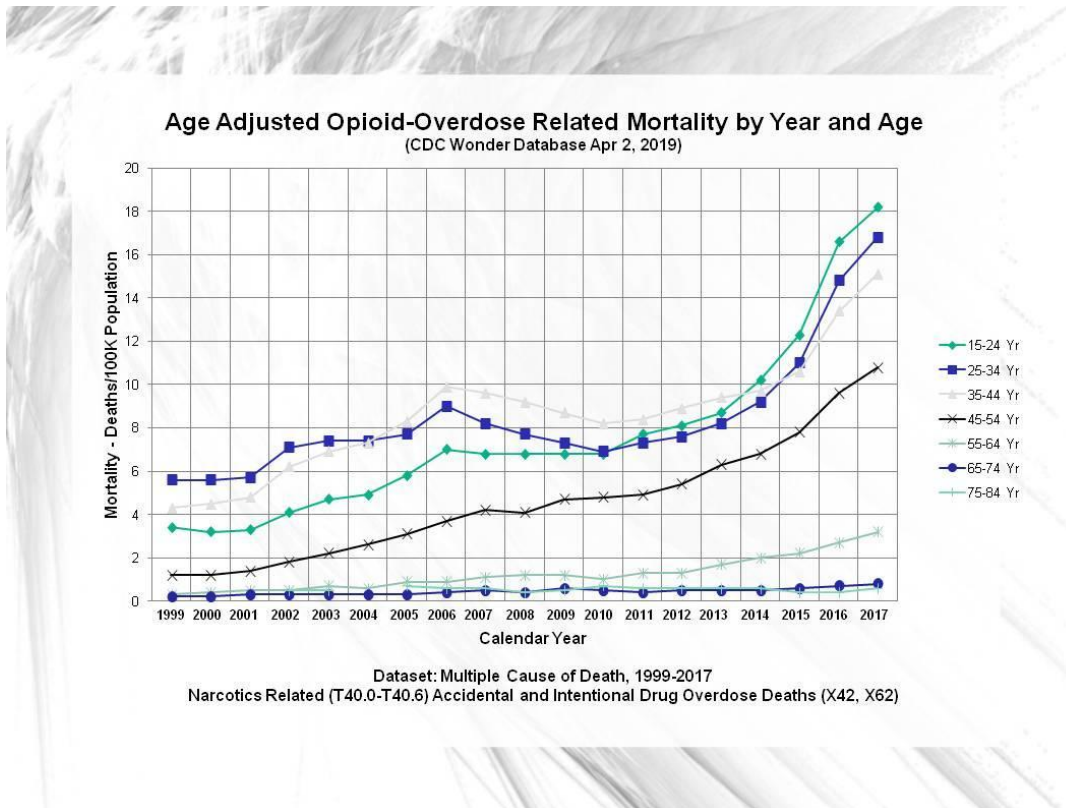
Richard A Lawhern, PhD, Patient Advocate [Lawhern@hotmail.com]

Over-prescribing by doctors to their patients did not cause the “Opioid Crisis”

“Unlike tolerance and physical dependence, addiction is not a predictable result of opioid prescribing... Addiction occurs in only a small percentage of persons who are exposed to opioids — even among those with pre-existing vulnerabilities.” *

[*Nora Volkow MD, Director National Institute on Drug Abuse, and Thomas A McLellan PhD -- NEMJ, 2016]

“We can no longer afford to view increasing drug-related mortality through a prescription opioid-myopic lens... A CDC Guideline only focused on “opioid prescribing” will perpetuate the fallacy that by restricting access to opioid analgesics, the nation’s overdose and death epidemic will end.” [AMA letter to Director CDC – Press Release, June 17, 2020]



There is no cause and effect relationship between prescribing and overdose mortality – But millions of patients are being denied safe and effective pain care.

Seniors over age 62 are prescribed opioids for pain three times more often than youth under age 19. But youth have overdose rates three times higher than seniors. No medical model can explain these demographics.