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Minnesota employers now have full toolkit to tackle opioid misuse challenge *Minnesota Safety Council, Minnesota Department of Health, HealthPartners and National Safety Council team up to address issues through the workplace*

ST. PAUL, MINN. (Nov. 8, 2019) – From online education, to resources for dealing with overdoses and drug disposal, to a first-of-its-kind label for insurance cards that prompts employees to ask about opioid prescription risks, Minnesota employers now have a full toolkit of resources they can use to address opioid misuse through the workplace.

The [Minnesota Safety Council](#), the [Minnesota Department of Health](#), [HealthPartners](#) and the [National Safety Council](#) said today they've teamed up to showcase a broad range of resources for Minnesota employers and others seeking to address opioid misuse through workplace efforts.

"Opioid misuse doesn't just stay home or live on the streets," said Minnesota Safety Council President Paul Aasen. "Each day it knocks on the doors of Minnesota workplaces whose employees face their own substance misuse challenges or are dealing with those of family members.

"No matter what your role -- employee, employer, health care provider, government agency -- we all need to be aware of risks and our opportunities to address this issue."

In 2017, Minnesota recorded 422 opioid overdose deaths, with nearly 2,000 emergency room visits for opioid-related overdoses recorded in 2018.

National Safety Council President and CEO Lorraine Martin outlined the organization's Opioids at Work Employer Toolkit which includes policies, implementation guides, fact sheets, videos, five-minute safety talks and other resources to help employers create a recovery-friendly workplace and implement an opioid safety policy.

Martin also announced a partnership to distribute the Council's first-of-their-kind "Opioids: Warn Me" labels, which are applied to insurance cards or pharmacy loyalty cards as a signal that the patient wants more information before opioids are prescribed. The free Warn Me labels are being made available to Minnesota employees in conjunction with the state's insurance Open Enrollment period underway in November.

"We know employers can make a huge impact when it comes to health and safety, especially where opioids are concerned," Martin said. "A recovery friendly and drug-free workplace is possible; we can all take actions that reduce stigma and support treatment for employees who need it."

Jeff Ogden, vice president, Dental Plans, HealthPartners, said the health care provider's efforts include its "Cut Short" opioid awareness campaign and drug Take Back medication centers.

Other efforts include the Minnesota Department of Public Health's Employer Toolkit, a joint project with the Minnesota Business Partnership, with a goal of changing the conversation around opioid. The web-based resources include information to promote safe use, storage and disposal of opioids; prepare for overdose emergencies, make help accessible to employees and support wellness.

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To access opioid safety and educational resources:

- National Safety Council [WARN ME label program](#)
- National Safety Council [Opioids at Work Employer Toolkit](#)
- Minnesota Department of Health [Employer Toolkit](#)
- HealthPartners ["Cut Short" opioid awareness program](#)
- B-roll and a JPEG version of the WARM ME label are available by contacting lani.jordan@minnesotasafetycouncil.org

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