



VHS NEWS

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Valley Hope Solutions has been providing billing and administrative services for behavioral health issues for more than 50 years, we are even more focused today on keeping our stakeholders informed of leading stories and issues pertaining to our ever-changing industry. We hope this serves to be an informative resource, while providing helpful tips, networking events and educational opportunities. Thank you for your continued support of Valley Hope Solutions - enjoy the journey with us!

www.ValleyHopeSolutions.com

Cinco De Mayo

is an annual celebration held on **May**



5. The date is observed to commemorate the Mexican Army's unlikely victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla, on May 5, 1862, under the leadership of General Ignacio Zaragoza

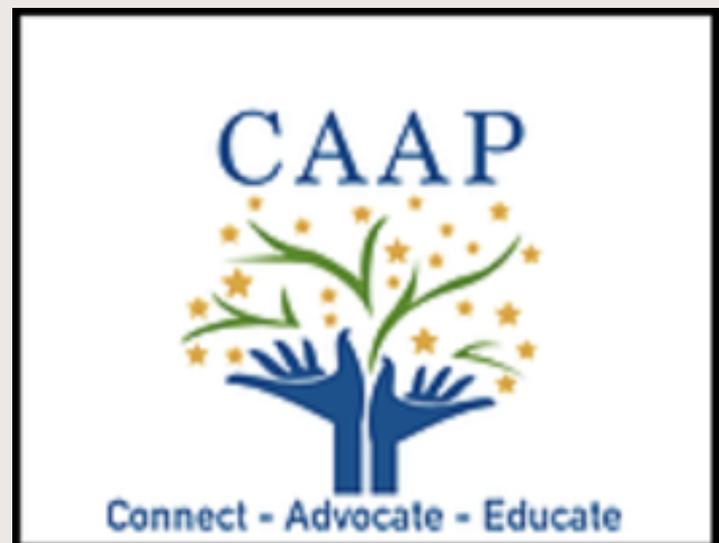
UPCOMING EVENTS

Colorado Association of Addiction Professionals

Annual Conference

June 21 - June 22, 2018 Chicago, IL

[Learn More on their website](#)



Biller's Corner:

Biller Tip: To avoid denials due to coverage changes, it is good practice to verify a patient's eligibility at every phase of treatment by calling or using an automated system.





National Institute on Drug Abuse

The Science of Drug Abuse & Addiction

OPIOID OVERDOSE CRISIS

How did this happen?

In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to prescription opioid pain relievers, and healthcare providers began to prescribe them at greater rates. This subsequently led to widespread diversion and misuse of these medications before it became clear that these medications could indeed be highly addictive. Opioid overdose rates began to increase. In 2015, more than 33,000 Americans died as a result of an opioid overdose, including prescription opioids, heroin, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid. That same year, an estimated 2 million people in the United States suffered from substance use disorders related to prescription opioid pain relievers, and 591,000 suffered from a heroin use disorder (not mutually exclusive)..

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FENTANYL-LACED COCAINE BECOMING A DEADLY PROBLEM AMONG DRUG USERS

March 29, 2018

A pipe was the only sign of drug use found near Chris Bennett's body in November. But it looked like the 32-year-old Taunton, Mass., native had stopped breathing and died of an opioid overdose. Bennett's mother, Liisa, couldn't understand what happened. Then she saw the toxicology report.

"I'm convinced he was smoking cocaine that was laced," she says. "That's what he had in his system, [it] was cocaine and fentanyl."

Liisa Bennett was shocked. Chris had developed an addiction to pain pills and then heroin in his late teens but had not used opioids for at least 10 years, as far as she knew. Bennett had warned her son that if he ever used opioids again, he'd be in greater danger of an overdose because fentanyl, an opioid drug more powerful than heroin, was mixed into much of the supply.

"My focus was making sure that he wasn't going to do the heroin that was laced," Bennett says. She never suspected the crack cocaine Chris smoked occasionally would kill him. "Absolutely not."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says fentanyl, which is up to 50 times more powerful than heroin, was found in more than half of overdose deaths last year in 10 states including Massachusetts.

Now, there's concern as it creeps into cocaine ...

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AN EXPERIMENT HELPS HEROIN USERS TEST THEIR STREET DRUGS FOR FENTANYL

In the day room at St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction, which runs a needle exchange program in the Bronx, a group of guys are playing dominoes and listening to salsa music while they wait for lunch. And Van Asher, one of the staffers in charge of "transactions" — that means he gives out needles — is talking up his latest idea for how to keep the users here safe.

He wants to tell them what's really in their stash.

"If you're doing dope," he says to one client, "we'll give you a test strip so you can test and see if there's fentanyl."

"I know what I'm getting is the raw," one client tells Asher, implying he knows his drugs are pure.

"That's what you think!" Asher tells him. "But how do you know? Are you buying it from, like, the FDA?"

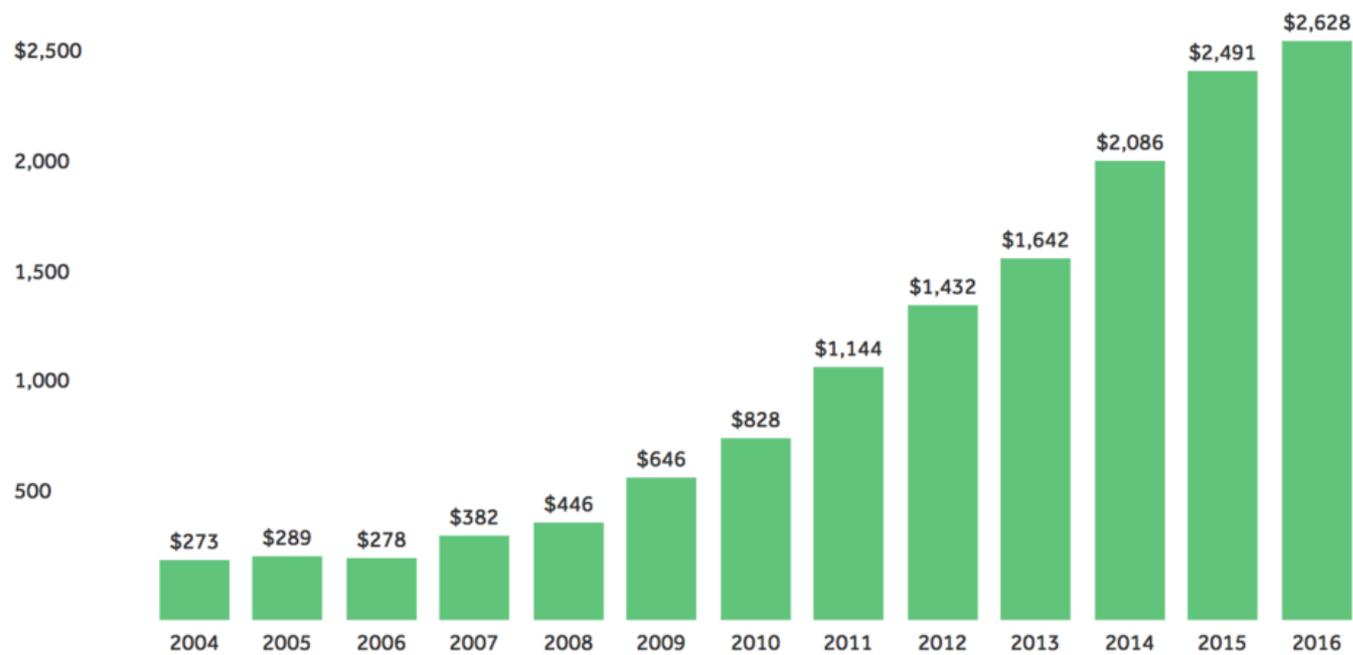
The client laughs.

Asher is the data manager here: He makes sure the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health departments get the information they need about the drugs taken by the people who come here ...

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The cost of treating opioid addiction and overdose has risen even as opioid prescription use has fallen

Total amounts paid for opioid addiction and overdose treatment diagnoses for enrollees in large employer plans, in millions, 2004-2016



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Truven MarketScan data, 2004-2016 • [Get the data](#) • PNG

Peterson-Kaiser
Health System Tracker

HERES THE STAGGERING AMOUNT OF MONEY THE OPIOID CRISIS IS COSTING AMERICAN EMPLOYERS

The American opioid addiction crisis isn't just a worsening public health tragedy that claims tens of thousands of lives each year and devastates local communities—it's also a massive financial strain on employers as the healthcare bill for treating workers (and their family members) addicted to painkillers balloons, according to a new report by the healthcare think tank Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF).

Large employers, which help provide the vast majority of Americans' private health insurance, paid for more than \$2.6 billion worth of opioid addiction and overdose treatment services in 2016, KFF finds. That means workers consumed nearly 10 times as much of these services in 2016 than they did 10 years ago. Of the \$2.6 billion in treatment for opioid addiction and overdoses, \$2.3 billion was paid by insurance, while another \$335 million was paid out of pocket—and more than half went toward covering employees' children ...

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Valley Hope Solutions

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Valley Hope Solutions' mission is to help with the quality of care for patients seeking mental and behavioral health treatment, by providing billing and support services led by industry experts, so healthcare providers can focus on the most important element of recovery: the patients.

Valley Hope Solutions Services include:

- Experts in Electronic Insurance Claim Submission
- Stringent Collection follow-up process
- Eligibility and Benefit Verification Services
- Insurance Contract Negotiations and SCA
- Administrative/Operational Consulting Services
- Boutique Billing (Specialty Services)
- Specialized Consulting For All Your Business And Accreditation Needs

