

NEWS BITES

SEPTEMBER 2026

LAPPA NEWS

PUBLICATIONS

Model Laws

The purpose of the [Model Addressing Inhalant Use Act](#) is to: (1) prohibit the sale of certain products containing inhalants to minors; (2) establish additional requirements for the sale of inhalants, including restrictions on advertising and the retail sale of nitrous oxide as well as packaging requirements; (3) establish criminal penalties related to inhalants; and (4) establish education, prevention, and treatment requirements. Regulating inhalants is complicated because many inhalants are common household substances, but doing so is growing increasingly critical as this availability and appearance of “safety” results in adolescents being the largest demographic that uses inhalants. This Model Act seeks to: (1) implement measures to educate the public, particularly adolescents, on the dangers of inhalant use; and (2) prevent initiation into inhalant use by placing restrictions on purchasing certain products.

Fact Sheets

[Drug Checking Equipment for Fentanyl and Other Substances \(Update\)](#): “Drug checking” is a strategy to prevent overdoses among individuals who use illicitly obtained drugs by informing these individuals of the substances present in a sample and if those substances include an unexpected adulterant. While drug checking programs are more common in parts of Europe and Canada, the proliferation of adulterants such as fentanyl and xylazine in the American illicit drug supply over the past decade has led to an increased interest in drug checking—and the equipment used to do it—in the United States. Drug checking equipment (DCE) includes both simple drug checking methods and more complex options. Simple DCE, such as fentanyl test strips (FTS) and other rapid drug test strips, liquid reagent tests, and thin layer chromatography kits, provide qualitative information about the presence of a particular drug/substance—or lack thereof—for which the test is designed. In June 2021, LAPPA published a fact sheet on FTS. LAPPA’s 2021 fact sheet addressed how disposable, single-use FTS work as a drug checking tool, investigating their efficacy, and the obstacle to large-scale FTS distribution created by state laws criminalizing the use and possession of drug paraphernalia. Now, five years later, some aspects of drug checking and FTS described in the 2021 fact sheet remain the same, while others have changed. The purpose of this fact sheet is to update stakeholders on the availability of rapid test strips for drugs other than fentanyl, new limitations on using federal funds for rapid drug test strips, new studies, and the lessening of state law obstacles.

FEDERAL NEWS BITS

New Overdose Prevention Channel Launches: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently launched a new resource that collects fatal and nonfatal overdose data, prevention strategies, and information about CDC programs together in one place. The [Overdose Prevention Data Channel](#) supports an ongoing need for timely, actionable information to guide overdose prevention efforts. The channel itself draws from three major CDC surveillance systems: the State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System; the Drug Overdose, Surveillance and Epidemiology System; and the National Vital Statistics System. The user-centered design is meant to make data more actionable, thereby helping health professionals monitor overdose patterns, recognize emerging threats, coordinate prevention efforts, and make data-informed decisions.

NATIONAL NEWS BITS

Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome Often Misdiagnosed: Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS) is an illness characterized by a recurring cycle of abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting following cannabis use, which is somewhat ironic, since medical cannabis is often prescribed to alleviate pain and nausea. Typically, receptors in your body that are susceptible to cannabinoids get stimulated when you consume THC, tamping down nausea, which is why marijuana is often prescribed for chemotherapy patients who often experience nausea from treatment. However, in some long-term heavy cannabis users, the body's system can change and become dysregulated or desensitized, and what used to protect against nausea now promotes it. It is not known why some frequent cannabis users develop CHS, but generally, those who do develop the condition have been using the substance for several years and have been using it heavily in smoking form. When use ceases, so do the symptoms of CHS. Short-term treatment for CHS includes administration of intravenous fluids and anti-nausea medication to prevent dehydration, but it can take several visits to an emergency department for CHS to be diagnosed since the symptoms are vague and common to other conditions.

STATE NEWS BITS

California: Governor Gavin Newsom recently launched CA Bridge Connect, the nation's first statewide call- and text-based service offering immediate help with follow-up support to Californians seeking help for opioid use. The confidential helpline serves those directly seeking assistance, families, caregivers and clinicians – regardless of insurance coverage. Those reaching out get same-day referrals to behavioral health navigators who can assess that person's needs and coordinate instant referrals to clinics, emergency departments, community providers, and telehealth providers. When appropriate, the navigators are also able to prescribe medication for addiction treatment. CA Bridge Connect is part of the state's "no wrong door" approach to care that is helping to build a system that gives everyone access to services and resources needed to live a healthy life.

District of Columbia: Starting in 2027, D.C. will shift part of the recurring multi-million-dollar cost of covering Medicaid for low-income residents from its general budget to a new funding source – opioid settlement funds. This move concerns stakeholders, such as addiction recovery advocates, people directly affected by the opioid crisis, and the commission charged with recommending how the city uses its share of opioid settlement funds. These groups do not want to see dollars that were awarded to D.C. and directed to be set aside to remediate the addiction crisis by increasing services or funding new programs, funneled into the general budgets to fill budget holes. However, D.C., like many jurisdictions, is facing a budget squeeze, and is attempting to turn its opioid settlement windfall into cash and fill gaps. Thirty organizations in the district have signed a letter protesting the use of settlement dollars to pay off city debts, and the chair of the district's Opioid

Abatement Advisory Commission claims that what the district's budget is proposing runs afoul of its own opioid litigation law. D.C.'s budget is currently pending a 30-day Congressional review, the last step in the annual budgeting process.

New York: Mayor Zohran Mamdani's first full budget makes permanent a program that pays participants 20 cents per returned used syringe, extending an initiative that was launched in 2024 and that has drawn significant criticism from skeptics who say that money used to fund the program should be funneled into treatment and not used as payouts to people who use drugs. The mayor's budget sets aside \$3 million for the health department's Community Syringe Redemption Program, which caps an individual's maximum return at 50 syringes and a payout of \$10 per day. Funding for the program comes from the city's \$189 million in opioid settlement dollars, and since the program's inception, more than 2.3 million syringes have been collected. Supporters note a drop in street litter, citing sanitation department statistics which indicate a significant drop in needles year over year. Currently, there are not any plans to add syringe drop-off sites or to lift the 50-syringe daily cap, though proponents of the program are advocating for both.

Pennsylvania: This summer, the commonwealth launched a pilot program across four counties to support seniors with opioid use disorder and other substance use issues. This demographic group faces unique challenges to overcoming their issues with substances for a myriad of reasons: (1) medication for later-in-life conditions can interfere with medication assisted treatment; (2) older patients can have mobility problems, making it difficult to get to treatment appointments; and (3) it is a time in life when many are navigating feelings about the deaths of life partners and friends. The WISE, or Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (already implemented in other states), will offer training and education for people over 55 about interactions between medication and alcohol, risks of addiction and overdose, early signs of addiction, early signs of depression, and changes in metabolism and physical activity as one ages. Funding for the program will come from Pennsylvania's opioid settlement funds.

South Dakota: Attorney General Marty Jackley plans to propose legislation limiting the use of automatic license plate readers (ALPRs), such as Flock cameras, to legitimate law enforcement purposes. While claiming that camera technology is a vital tool for law enforcement, he also noted that the technology deserves legislative attention to ensure that the proper safeguards are in place to protect privacy. National groups, like the American Civil Liberties Union, are raising concerns about how the data collected by ALPR cameras are used, and stories are emerging nationally of police officers abusing the privilege of access to the data by using it to track romantic partners or ex-spouses. In most jurisdictions, decisions on how camera technology is used, where cameras are placed, how records are kept, and how data is accessed are regulated locally. Jackley hopes that statewide legislation will ensure that data from ALPRs would only be collected, accessed, and used for law enforcement investigations into criminal activity. In February 2026, LAPP published the [Model Automatic License Plate Recognition System Act](#), which addresses many of the issues with which South Dakota and other states are now grappling related to ALPRs.

Virginia: Researchers at Virginia Tech are testing their newly developed small, wearable patch that can detect fentanyl in a person's system and upon doing so, automatically release naloxone into the wearer's system in hopes of reversing any potential fentanyl overdose. The patch is called the iNal patch, is smaller than a penny, and is embedded with 121 microneedle tips that when fentanyl is sensed, open and deliver naloxone directly through the skin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that nearly 70,000 people died from drug overdoses in the U.S. in 2025, and more than half of those overdoses were linked to fentanyl, with many of the deaths occurring when no other people were around to administer lifesaving naloxone. The iNal patch is being developed with a 24-hour lifespan and a capability of delivering multiple doses of naloxone, which is critical in cases of fentanyl overdose since fentanyl can stay in a person's system after an initial dose of an opioid antidote has worn off. Researchers say that the patch's technology could potentially be adapted to

detect other opioids or perhaps even markers for other diseases, and the team at Virginia Tech is seeking funding to conduct a clinical trial on large animals and eventually, humans.

Wyoming: Attorney General Keith Kautz has determined that the medical cannabis rescheduling initiative advancing on the federal level will not take place in Wyoming. In a press release on July 7, 2026, Kautz announced that all marijuana products will remain in Schedule I of the Wyoming Controlled Substances Act. Wyoming is the latest state to decide not to implement rescheduling of medical marijuana, highlighting the jurisdictions' autonomy in cannabis reform. Wyoming has some of the nation's most restrictive cannabis policies in the country, with neither adult use nor medical use being legal. Only patients suffering from epilepsy that do not respond to any other treatment are permitted to use products containing CBD, the main non-intoxicating compound in cannabis. Several years ago, activists pushed a ballot measure to legalize broader use of medical marijuana and decriminalize adult use, but both initiatives failed.

NOTABLE STUDIES

Postoperative Prescribing Decreasing: A [study](#) recently published in *The Journal of Pain* showed that postoperative opioid prescribing, across a wide range of surgical procedures, for Medicaid beneficiaries declined substantially between 2016 to 2017 and 2021 to 2022. Researchers compared postoperative dispensing patterns among patients aged 0 to 64 who received any of 24 common surgical procedures during 2016 to 2017 and then 2021 to 2022. Among eligible Medicaid enrollees, 267,142 patients received a surgical procedure in 2016 to 2017, compared with 223,647 patients in 2021 to 2022. Of those patients that had a procedure in 2016 to 2017, 57.1 percent received a postoperative opioid prescription, compared with 40.3 percent who had a surgical procedure in 2021 to 2022. The rate decreased significantly across 24 common procedures, except for laparoscopic colectomy. The study showed that the mean supply of prescribed opioids also decreased across all procedures as well as daily opioid dosage, except for tonsillectomies. The authors of the study concluded that their findings indicate a stricter adherence by the prescribing community to evidence-based prescribing guidelines which improve patient outcomes and minimize the risk of opioid misuse and overdose.

IN OTHER NEWS



PTACC Summit 2026: The PTACC 2026 International Deflection and Pre-Arrest Diversion Summit is taking place at Loews Ventana Hotel in Tucson, Arizona, from Tuesday, December 1 through Friday, December 4!

With the theme, Innovation and Inspiration in Deflection: Highlighting Hope, Help, and Heroes in our Field, this year, the Summit will be recognizing and celebrating innovations in deflection with a special focus on: (1) tribal deflection; (2) rural and frontier deflection; (3) fire and EMS deflection; (4) AI and deflection; and (5) the care

and well-being of first responders. Visit <https://ptaccollaborative.org/2026-summit/> for more information about this event.

ABOUT THE LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC POLICY ASSOCIATION

The Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (LAPPA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to conduct legal and legislative research and analysis and draft legislation on effective law and policy in the areas of public safety and health, substance use disorders, and the criminal justice system.

LAPPA produces up-to-the-minute comparative analyses, publications, educational brochures, and other tools ranging from podcasts to model laws and policies that can be used by national, state, and local criminal justice and substance use disorder practitioners who want the latest comprehensive information on law and policy. Examples of topics on which LAPPA has assisted stakeholders include naloxone laws, law enforcement/community engagement, alternatives to incarceration for those with substance use disorder, medication for addiction treatment in correctional settings, and the involuntary commitment of individuals with alcohol or substance use disorders.

For more information about LAPPA, please visit: <https://legislativeanalysis.org/>.

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