



Overview of the Opioid Crisis

Where We Are and Where We Need to Go

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Oh, thanks. Thank you, Pat. It's a pleasure to be here talking with all of you about the opioid crisis. My talk really is going to focus on opioids, on prescription opioids, not other prescription drugs. I think for many people, maybe not all of you, but certainly most of the public may wonder why we would be interested in prescription opioids at a time when opioid overdose deaths overwhelmingly involve illicitly synthesized opioids fentanyl primarily. And, you know, I think to some of you, again, the answer to that question might be clear, but for many, I think they would wonder, why would we focus on this? Some of the answers to that question might be readily obvious. For example, we know that a large majority of individuals who are losing their lives to fentanyl, illicitly synthesized fentanyl, were first addicted to prescription opioids before winding up on the black market. So that would be sort of one fairly obvious reason. As we go through my talk, I think you'll be able to think of other good reasons why we should be concerned. **I think that you are we are also at a point now where increasingly we're hearing that the pendulum has swung too far in the direction of underprescribing opioids. People are losing their lives to illicit fentanyl efforts to address the opioid crisis by focusing on prescription opioids have failed, and now pain patients are the collateral damage in our efforts to address the opioid crisis. That narrative is false,** and I think you'll understand that as we go through my presentation. And lastly, we're also hearing that efforts to control supply