



HUNT INSIDER

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OVERDOSE DEATHS INCREASING

According to a news release dated June 9, 2009 from the Drug Policy Alliance Network, overdose deaths are now the second leading cause of accidental deaths in the United States, trailing only to driving fatalities.

The report, which can be found at www.drugpolicy.org, states that despite more than 20,000 overdose deaths a year, not a single federal dollar is currently dedicated to overdose death prevention. Congresswoman Donna Edwards introduced legislation in June to address the growing problem. The overdose fatality prevention bill would create a \$27 million per year grant for cities, states, tribal governments and nonprofit groups to implement overdose prevention plans.

One of the proposals under this legislation is the enactment of a "Good Samaritan" immunity law protecting those who call 911 during an alcohol or drug overdose. Another is an availability program for Naloxone, a low cost drug that reverses overdoses within three minutes of being administered.

During the first half of the year 2009, HUNT officers investigated 10 overdoses, 5 of which resulted in death. These numbers are more than double those cases in 2008, and more than triple those in 2007.

The drugs most commonly used by the overdose victims in the aforementioned HUNT investigations were methadone, heroin, and oxycodone, respectively.

ELECTRONIC DISSEMINATION

Due to the high costs of printing and mailing, beginning with this issue, the HUNT INSIDER is being disseminated via e-mail. Feedback regarding this transition, as well as requests for removal from the mailing list and/or e-mail address changes can be handled by simply replying to the e-mail.

FEATURED BOARD MEMBER: RICK STEIGER

Rick Steiger is the prosecuting attorney for Presque Isle County. He's been a member of the HUNT board of directors and the legal advisor for the team since 2006.



Rick graduated from California State University-Chico where he received a Bachelors of Science degree and went on to receive a Juris Doctor degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

Rick has focused the bulk of his legal career on public service. He initially worked as a public defender for the Office of Public Advocacy in Alpena. In 2003, he accepted the position of Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Alpena County. In 2005, he went into private practice with the Alpena law firm White, Mack, and McDonald. Then, in 2006, he accepted the position of assistant prosecuting attorney for Presque Isle County. Following the retirement of Don McLennan in late 2006, Rick was appointed Prosecuting Attorney for Presque Isle County, and was subsequently elected to that position in November of 2008.

Rick currently serves as a board member for the Presque Isle County DARE program; vice-president and board member for the Rogers City Kiwanis; and treasurer and board member for the Rogers City Little League. He resides in Rogers City with his wife Melissa, and their three children.

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Cited: www.drugpolicy.org/news/pressroom/pressrelease/pr060809.cfm

www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-27417_51869---,00.html

THE MICHIGAN MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT

In November of 2008 Michigan voters approved the legalization of medical marijuana. The Michigan Department of Community Health, Bureau of Health Professions, has been tasked with the administration of the Michigan Medical Marijuana Program, or MMMP.

The basics of the new Michigan Medical Marijuana Act are as follows: The sale of marijuana is not legal, under any circumstances. The possession, use, and/or manufacture of marijuana is legal only to those who possess a medical marijuana registry identification card. For any individual who does not possess the appropriate card, the possession, use, delivery, and/or manufacture of marijuana is a crime, carrying the same penalties as were previously in place.

A medical marijuana registry identification card may be obtained by a patient, or a primary caregiver as follows:

Patient: Must have a debilitating medical condition including cancer, glaucoma, H.I.V., AIDS, hepatitis C, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Crohn's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and/or nail patella; or is being treated for a medical condition that produces cachexia or wasting syndrome, severe and chronic pain, severe nausea, seizures, and/or persistent muscle spasms.

If one of the above conditions exist, a medical marijuana registry identification card may be applied for from the Michigan Department of Community Health. This application requires the following:

- A) A written certification from a physician, stating the patient's condition and stating that in the physician's opinion, the patient is likely to receive therapeutic or palliative benefit from the medical use of marijuana.
- B) Application fee (currently \$100.00 unless the patient is enrolled in Medicaid or S.S.I., in which case the application fee is \$25.00).
- C) Name, address, date of birth of patient
- D) Name, address, date of birth of physician

Primary Caregiver: Must be at least 21 years of age, must not have a previous conviction of a felony drug crime, and must have been designated on the patient's application as their primary caregiver.

Limitations: Upon the issuance of a medical marijuana registry identification card, a patient may possess no more than 2.5 ounces of usable marijuana, and, if the patient has not designated a primary caregiver, not more than 12 marijuana plants, which must be kept in an enclosed, locked facility. A primary caregiver, with a medical marijuana registry identification card, may possess no more than 2.5 ounces of usable marijuana, and no more than 12 marijuana plants per patient. A patient may have no more than one primary caregiver, and a primary caregiver may assist no more than 5 qualifying patients.

Any registered qualifying patient or registered primary caregiver who sells marijuana to someone who is not allowed to use marijuana for medical purposes under this act shall have his or her registry identification card revoked and is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 2 years or a fine of not more than \$2,000.00, or both, in addition to any other normal penalties for the distribution of marijuana.

The enactment of this law does not permit any person to: possess or engage in the use of marijuana in a school bus or on the grounds of any school or any correctional facility, or to smoke marijuana in any public place or on any form of public transportation. It also does not permit the individual to operate, navigate, or be in actual physical control of any motor vehicle, aircraft, or motorboat while under the influence of marijuana, or to undertake any task under the influence of marijuana, when doing so would constitute negligence or professional malpractice.

