The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) and the Medical Association of Georgia Foundation have been leaders in the effort to reduce prescription drug misuse in Georgia for a number of years.

One of the MAG Foundation’s marquee programs is the ‘Think About It’ initiative to reduce prescription drug misuse. Since 2012, the MAG Foundation has...

- Funded 20 prescription drug disposal boxes, which enable Georgians to dispose of unneeded or expired prescription drugs in a safe and secure manner.

- Distributed more than one million educational leaflets at pharmacies, hospitals and medical practices that encourage Georgians to 1) only take their medicine as prescribed and 2) not share their medicine and 3) store their medicine in a safe and secure place and 4) properly dispose of any unused medicine.

- Given opioid misuse prevention presentations at more than 50 town halls and 20 physician events.

- Established social media and/or other educational campaigns on 10 college campuses as part of its ‘Higher Education TAKE-BACK Initiative.’

- Formed an advisory committee that includes the Georgia Dental Association, the Georgia Society of Addiction Medicine, the Georgia Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, the Georgia Pharmacy Association, and the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University to raise awareness regarding 1) Georgia Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) registration and use and 2) the state’s controlled substances continuing medical education (CME) requirement and 3) good prescribing practices.

- Managed ‘Project DAN’ (Deaths Avoided by Naloxone). In addition to raising awareness, this effort provided first responders in 53 counties in Georgia with more than 5,000 doses of naloxone, which can be used to save patients who are suffering from a drug overdose. ‘Project DAN’ has been credited with saving more than 70 lives in Georgia.

MAG has addressed opioid misuse on its ‘Top Docs Radio’ program on six occasions.

MAG supports the American Medical Association’s (AMA) efforts to “call on physicians to re-examine their prescribing practices to help reverse the [opioid misuse] epidemic.”
While acknowledging that “much more work remains to reverse the nation’s [opioid misuse] epidemic,” AMA’s ‘Opioid Task Force Progress Report’ for 2019 found that...

- Physicians and other health care professionals in the U.S. increased their PDMP use by 56 percent between 2017 and 2018.

- The number of physician and other health care professional PDMP “queries” in Georgia rose from about 3 million in 2017 to nearly 6.6 million in 2018 – a 55 percent increase.

- The number of physicians and other health care professionals who have registered with a state PDMP in the U.S. has risen to nearly 2 million.

- The number of physicians and other health care professionals who have registered with Georgia’s PDMP has seen a three-fold increase in the last several years - going from about 18,000 in 2016 to more than 41,000 in 2017 and more than 54,000 in 2018.

- The number of retail prescriptions that are being filled for “all opioid analgesics” in Georgia has dropped from about 86 million in 2013 to some 6.7 million in 2018 – a 22.4 percent decrease. AMA also recorded an 11 percent decline in this metric between 2017 and 2018, dropping from 7.5 million to 6.7 million.

Click for AMA ‘2019 Opioid Task Force Progress Report’

Click for AMA National PDMP Use/Registration Summary

Click for AMA ‘State & National Totals of Retail Filled Prescriptions: All Opioid Analgesics, 2013-2018’ Summary

Go to www.mag.org/tai or contact Lori Cassity Murphy at lmurphy@mag.org or 678.303.9282 for details on the MAG Foundation’s ‘Think About It’ initiative.

With more than 8,000 members, MAG is the leading voice for physicians in Georgia. MAG represents physicians in every specialty and practice setting in the state – and MAG membership has increased by more than 35 percent since 2010. Go to www.mag.org for additional information.