

Opinion: Resources needed to battle Nev. opioid epidemic

By Tom Vilsack and Brian Sandoval

In Nevada and across the country, opioid addiction is a fast-growing problem that disproportionately affects rural communities. New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows opioids were involved in 28,648 deaths in 2014, meaning more Americans are dying from drug overdoses than in motor vehicle crashes each year.

Nevada has been hit particularly hard by this epidemic. Tragically, 382 people in the Silver State died of drug overdoses in 2014. Chances are, readers of this column have been affected by a loved one's addiction, or know someone who has. In fact, a recent poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 44 percent of Americans personally know someone who has been addicted to prescription pain medication.

This is a health crisis, and it is going to take serious action from all levels of government, the health care community, law enforcement and others to turn those numbers around.

Read the whole story