

Heroin: An Epidemic

Robert B. Berlin
State's Attorney



Heroin cases on the Rise

- June, 2013: **57 heroin**
26 prescription pills
- August, 2015: **128 heroin**
66 prescription pills
- October, 2016: **121 heroin**
104 prescription pills
- January, 2018: **149 heroin/fentanyl**
111 prescription pills



ENHANCED PURITY

35% at the street level in Chicago in 2010, compared to about 4% pure in the late 1980's.



COST

- **1/10 of a gram of heroin sells for \$10 in Chicago**
- **In 1981, the average price per gram of pure heroin was \$3,260; by 2012, that price had decreased to \$500.**



Where Does the Heroin come from?

- **About ½ of the heroin in the United States comes from Mexico, followed by South America and Asia**
- **The amount of heroin seized at the Southwest U.S./ Mexican border increased 232% from 2008 to 2012**



- **In 2013, DuMeg experienced a 319% increase in heroin purchases/seizures from 2012.**
- **According to the Justice Dept., Mexican heroin production increased more than six-fold from 2005 to 2009.**
- **The number of heroin users in the U.S. nearly doubled between 2007 (161,000) and 2013 (289,000).**
- **The number of heroin deaths in the U.S. have tripled between 2007 (2,402) and 2013 (8,260).**



PRESCRIPTION DRUG CORRELATION

- **According to a recent federal survey, 4 out of 5 new heroin users have previously used illicit pain pills.**
- **More than half of Americans who misuse opioids report getting them from a friend or relative, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.**



America's Obsession with Pain Relievers

- According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the volume of prescription pain reliever sales in 2010 was four times the volume in 1999.
- In 2012 alone, 259 million prescriptions were written for opioids

How Prevalent is Opioid Use in the U.S.?

- According to the National Survey on Drug Abuse and Health, 92 million or 37.8% of American Adults used prescription opioids in 2014.
- By comparison, there are 17.1 million heavy alcohol users among adults over 18, according to the 2015 survey.



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Fatality Statistics (2014)

- **42,773 Suicides** (American Assn. of Suicidology)
- **32,675 Motor Vehicle Deaths** (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- **29,467 Heroin/Prescription Pain Pill Overdose Deaths** (American Society of Addiction Medicine)
- **14,249 Murders** (FBI)

- **Prescription drug abuse ranks third (behind alcohol and marijuana) for recreational intoxication by Americans over the age of 14.**



DEPRESSANTS

- **Recent news reports relate that Xanax (Alprazolam) is beginning to replace marijuana as the most common impairing substance found in drivers arrested for DUI, after alcohol.**
- **A survey conducted by The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that more than 22% of drivers tested positive for drugs compared to only 8.3% testing positive for alcohol during weekend nights.**

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XANAX

- **In Illinois, the State Police Forensic Laboratory show more submissions of seized Xanax than Vicodin in the second quarter of 2015**



MARIJUANA

- **In the 1980s, potency was 4% THC.
Now, marijuana is between 20 to 30
% THC.**

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Marijuana is a Gateway Drug

- **According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, People who are addicted to marijuana are three times more likely to be addicted to heroin.**

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

- **Two-Pronged Approach**



ENFORCEMENT

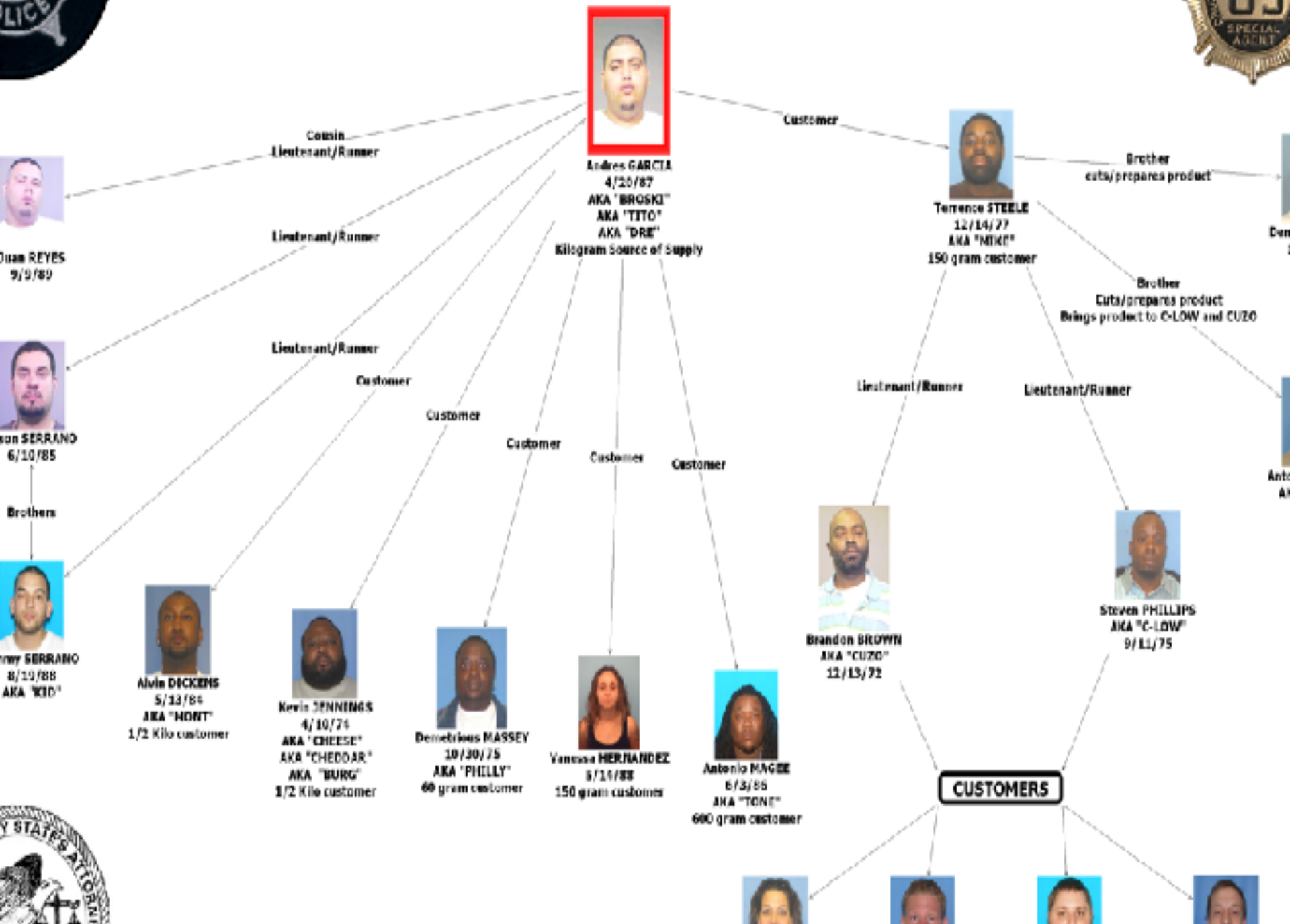
- **DuMEG/DEA**
- **CHANGES IN THE LAW**



D.E.A. 360 Approach

- **Enforcement:** Partner with local law enforcement to target all levels of drug trafficking organizations.
- **Increase Awareness:** engage drug manufacturers, wholesalers, practitioners and pharmacists to increase awareness of the heroin and prescription drug problem and push for responsible prescribing and use of these medications throughout the medical community.
- **Change attitudes:** community outreach and partnership with local organizations following DEA enforcement actions to equip and empower communities with the tools to fight the heroin and prescription drug epidemic.

RICO CHARGES



- **As of August 9, 2012: New law: (makes delivery/ pcs with intent of 3 grams (down from 5 grams) non-probationable.**
- **The Illinois State Crime Commission has offered a \$1,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of anyone selling or providing heroin to a juvenile in DuPage County (630-778-9191)**
- **Overdose limited-immunity law**
- **New RICO Law**



- **New DEA Rule: On October 6, 2014 hydrocodone combination products (HCPs) moved from Schedule III to the stricter Schedule II.**
- **If one of these drugs is needed for longer than 30 days, the doctor has to write a new prescription. Refills are no longer allowed.**
- **HCPs include Norco, Vicodin and Hydrocodone.**

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DRUG INDUCED HOMICIDE

- **A person unlawfully delivers a controlled substance to another, and any person's death is caused by the injection, inhalation, absorption, or ingestion of any amount of that controlled substance.**
- **Class X Felony**

CIVIL LAW SUIT

- Filed December 21, 2017
- Defendants are Purdue Pharma, Abbot Laboratories, Teva, Cephalon, Johnson & Johnson, Janssen, Ortho-McNeil, Endo Health Solutions
- Causes of Action:
 1. Violation of Illinois Consumer Fraud Act
 2. Violation of the Illinois Uniform Deceptive Trade Practices Act
 3. Civil Conspiracy
 4. Insurance Fraud
 5. Public Nuisance
 6. Unjust Enrichment

EDUCATION AND TREATMENT

- **Narcan Program**
- **Heroin Opioid Prevention and Education (HOPE)**

EDUCATION

- Robert Crown Center
- Heroin Forums
- Narcan/Project Connect Programs
- Drug Forfeiture Grants
- New DuPage County Website devoted to heroin
www.heroindupage.org

(Info for on warning signs for parents; types of treatment and local treatment options; support for addicts and family members)



DRUG COURT

- **1,807 applicants from 2002-2017**
- **789 admitted since 2002**
- **2 tracks**
- **Over 79% of participants are addicted to heroin**
- **Drug Court process (application, evaluation, acceptance, contract)**
- **Staffings**

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- **The idea is to stop the addiction**
- **Higher relapse than other drugs**
- **Normally, the recidivism rate for felons is 30% within 3 years (With Drug Court, that rate is 8%)**
- **COST: \$30,000 to incarcerate versus \$3,000-4,000 a year for drug court**



Opioid Addiction is a Mental Health Crisis, not a Crime Wave

- **For Addicts: We need to shift from a culture of shame and punishment to one of healing and wellness**
- **More than 40 percent of people who struggle with addiction also have another mental health challenge of some kind—and most of those people never end up seeking treatment or services.**

HOSPITALS CUTTING BACK ON OPIOID USE

- According to a recent Tribune article, many hospitals are moving to alternative methods of treating pain
- Rush University Medical Center has a new post-surgical medication protocol
- Northwestern Hospital is tutoring patients about the potential dangers of opioids and asking them to bring unused medication to follow-up visits with their surgeons, where the drugs can be disposed of

What Can You do?

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