

States ask insurers to prioritize non-opioid pain treatment

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Attorneys general representing the majority of states are asking the insurance industry to encourage pain treatment through means other than prescriptions for opioid painkillers.

Opioid overdoses are responsible for tens of thousands of deaths a year in the U.S.

The top government lawyers in 35 states signed a letter sent Monday to the trade group America's Health Insurance Plans. They asked insurers to make coverage of non-opioid treatments such as [physical therapy](#) and massage a priority.

The lawyers called the status quo—with incentives to prescribe opioids—"unacceptable."

The insurers group did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The nation is in the thick of an opioid epidemic. In 2015, more than 52,000 people across the country died from drug overdoses, most of them involving opioids.

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