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# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### Press Release



#### District Attorney Morrissey's Safe Prescribing Conference draws 250 clinicians & pharmacists

### NORFOLK COUNTY SAFE PRESCRIBING CONFERENCE

FOR PRESCRIBERS, PHARMACISTS, LAW ENFORCEMENT & SUBSTANCE PREVENTION COALITION LEADERS



Doctor shopping by addicts, overprescribing of opiate pain medication and the current lack of counseling for patients on the safe storage and disposal of powerful prescription drugs are all contributing to the supply of narcotics on the street, according to Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey.

More than 250 doctors, nurses, pharmacists and substance abuse prevention leaders from across Norfolk County joined Morrissey Wednesday at Lombardo's conference facility in Randolph for a "Safe Prescribing Conference," to try and change that.



"Every clinician with a prescription pad and everyone in a white coat behind the pharmacy counter is a potential target for addicts trying to parlay fake injuries or forged prescriptions into pill bottles of prescription narcotics," District Attorney Morrissey said at the close of the 5-hour conference, which also drew a number of area police and fire chiefs and lieutenants, legislators and local substance abuse coalition leaders.

"What we hear from physicians and pharmacists alike is that the problem is huge and the amount of available training for them to learn to deal with it is limited," Morrissey said. "With the help of the DEA, Boston University, Northeastern University, Quincy Police, Dr. Daniel Alford and experts from my own office, we were able to fill that need for a good number. This can only help us."



Morrissey said that State Police detectives from his office had responded to 61 apparent drug overdoses in 2013 from heroin and prescription opiates, and Norfolk County is not alone in seeing a steep rise in such deaths. "Opiate addiction is also driving an inordinate amount of our property crimes, armed robberies and violence," he said.

Using funding from a federal grant, Morrissey was able to partner with Boston University School of Medicine and Northeastern University Bouve' College of Health Sciences School of Pharmacy to offer Continuing Education Credits to the professionals who attended. "Clinicians and pharmacists have a vital role to play in the front end, in the prevention of overuse and abuse of these drugs," Morrissey said. "I am personally grateful to every pharmacist and every clinician who attended, and am hopeful they will share this message within their practices and organizations."



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