Most Americans Want Drug Companies to be Accountable for Opioid Crisis, Poll Finds

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A third of Americans have been directly affected by the current opioid epidemic that is killing more than 100 people every day, according to a new poll by NPR and Ipsos.

?One in three have been personally affected in some way, either by knowing someone who has overdosed or by knowing someone with opioid addiction,? said Mallory Newall, lead Ipsos researcher on the survey.

And according to the same survey, 57 percent of Americans believe that pharmaceutical companies should be held responsible for making the epidemic worse. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that more than 200,000 Americans have died from prescription drug overdoses since the addiction crisis began in the late 1990s. It was at this point in time that pharmaceutical companies began marketing highly addictive painkillers aggressively.

The opioid problem affects people across ideological divides. Similarly, the thought that pharmaceutical companies must be held accountable is shared by many.

?It's something, no matter your age, your gender, no matter where you live, your party affiliation, that people believe in large numbers,? Newall added.

Interestingly, support is even higher for making drug companies pay for the cost of addiction treatment services. In fact, more than 70 percent of Americans believe that this is the right course of action. They believe that companies should cover the cost of the drug Naloxone, to help people who are struggling with addiction. Naloxone is used to revive people who have overdosed.

These results reflect the perilous situation that drug makers and distributors are in at the moment. Drug manufacturers like Purdue Pharma, McKesson, and Johnson & Johnson are facing these issues right now. These are some of the biggest companies in the US and were once among the most trusted.

But earlier, at an addiction conference in Atlanta, President Trump spoke of the industry as a pariah.

?We are holding Big Pharma accountable; they should be accountable,? Trump said, mentioning new federal criminal indictments against executives unveiled in New York recently.

The NPR and Ipsos survey found that Americans personally affected by the opioid epidemic are even more eager to see drug companies held accountable. Drug manufacturers are already being flooded by civil lawsuits, with more than 1,600 filed for the opioid epidemic.

The Justice Department has also arrested executives who worked for the major prescription drug distributor called Rochester Drug Cooperative. This is one of the companies that ship large quantities of opioids from manufacturers to local pharmacies.

?It is the first time executives of a pharmaceutical distributor and the distributor itself have been charged with drug trafficking,? said Jeff Berman, US attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Berman said in a news conference that one of the company?s executives has pleaded guilty. He said that the firm itself has admitted wrongdoing, agreeing to pay a $20 million fine.

Executives allegedly funneled prescription opioid pills to pharmacies that then sold them on the black market. Click the link to see Miami's top rehab placement programs.

?This epidemic has been driven by greed," Berman said. ?Our office will do everything in its power to bring to justice anyone responsible for unlawfully fueling this opioid epidemic, and that includes executives who illegally distribute drugs from their boardrooms.?

If someone in the family is struggling with opioid or alcohol addiction, it is important to seek help. A combination of medical detox and behavioral therapy can go a long way in the fight against drug abuse. But because every individual is affected by addiction differently, a comprehensive program tailored to their specific needs is necessary. Look for a nearby addiction treatment facility today and find out how drug treatment programs work.

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