

Pittsburgh Mayor Illegally Using Fentanyl Test Strips to Lower Overdose Death Rate Legacy Healing Center Responds

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Pittsburgh, PA - Multiple policymakers and harm reduction programs have been pushing for a change in the laws surrounding fentanyl test strips in Pennsylvania. They're asking that the test strips be made legal because they're proven to prevent drug overdose deaths. After years of failed attempts through the regular channels of lawmaking, Pittsburgh Mayor, William Peduto, took matters into his own hands issuing an executive order that changed the legal status of fentanyl test strips.

In a statement, Mayor Peduto said, "Fentanyl test strips have been identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other expert organizations as a critical tool in preventing opioid-related overdoses and deaths."

The recent change in the way Pittsburgh classifies fentanyl test strips comes as the rate of overdose deaths is skyrocketing in the region. Pittsburgh's overdose rate is surging even faster than the record-breaking national average. A Pittsburgh Post Gazette report showed that 84% of last year's fatal overdoses involved fentanyl, the highest percentage on record. Early data for 2021 shows an even higher rate.

With the recent spike in fentanyl-laced drugs which now includes heroin, crack, cocaine, benzodiazepines, methamphetamine, ecstasy, a surge of counterfeit prescription pills, and even marijuana, it's become crucial for people to be able to test for the presence of deadly fentanyl.

Mayor Peduto took action on the illegal status of fentanyl test strips because drug overdose has become a crisis in Pennsylvania and surrounding areas. He did so under advisement from several organizations and experts that have been calling for a reexamination of harm reduction programs and surrounding laws for years.

In a statement, the City of Pittsburgh said that the COVID-19 pandemic placed significant mental stress on the public, exacerbating mental health disorders. To find relief, people are using more drugs and at higher frequencies which has led to an increase in rates of addiction and overdose. With the combined risks of added mental strain and the increased presence of fentanyl-laced drugs, Pittsburgh and other states are reevaluating their harm reduction policies.

Legacy Healing Center, an addiction treatment center in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, serves residents of surrounding communities that have been hit hard by the opioid crisis, including Pittsburgh. Legacy's Chief Clinical Officer, David Levin, commented on the effects of COVID-19 on mental health and substance abuse saying, "The disease of addiction metastasizes in isolation. While in quarantine, we are especially vulnerable and susceptible to [addiction], depression, anxiety, and relapse because of the isolation, because of the quarantine, because of the fear."

The need for legal reforms and increased access to effective addiction treatment in Pittsburgh like that offered at Legacy Healing Center in New Jersey and South Florida has never been greater. People are encouraged to act preventatively by reaching out to an accredited behavioral health center. To learn more or to speak with a treatment specialist anytime, 24/7, call (888) 534-2295 or visit www.legacyhealing.com.

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For more information about Legacy Healing Center Cherry Hill, contact the company here: Legacy Healing Center Cherry Hill Travis Benfaida (856) 263-4965 info@legacyhealing.com 800 Kings Hwy N suite 100, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

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Website: <https://www.legacyhealing.com/cherry-hill>

Email: info@legacyhealing.com

Phone: (856) 263-4965



