

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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January 5, 2017

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## **Attorney General Balderas Announces Project OPEN: Opioid Prevention & Education Network**

### *AG's Project OPEN kicks off with a free Opioid Abuse Training in Albuquerque*

*Albuquerque, NM* – This morning, New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas announced a new initiative by his office to combat the opioid abuse and addiction crisis in New Mexico. *Project OPEN: Opioid Prevention & Education Network* will kick off by hosting an Opioid Abuse Training in Albuquerque on January 11, 2017. The training, presented in conjunction with the National Association of Attorneys General, is free and will expose attorneys, policy advisors, investigators, healthcare professionals, consumer advocates and others to the impact and results of opioid abuse on New Mexico communities. It is intended to enhance the participants' knowledge and understanding of opioid addiction and the countless issues involved.

“We can no longer allow opioid abuse and addiction to destroy New Mexico families and the future of our youth,” said Attorney General Balderas. “I created Project OPEN in order to combat the opioid crisis in our state, and our first action will be training New Mexicans who are on the frontlines of this fight at our free Opioid Abuse Training. I encourage advocates, law enforcement officials, healthcare professionals and policy makers from all corners of New Mexico to attend this training so we can work together to make our families safer and healthier.”

Topics at the training include the following: *Overview of Opioid Abuse Issues, Treatment Options and Issues, Protecting Consumers, Opioids and Dealing with Fraud, and Court Involvement and Beyond*. Attorney General Balderas will present at the training in addition to experts from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Healing Addiction in our Community, National Association of Attorneys General, New Mexico Department of Health, New Mexico Office of the Attorney General, and the Ohio Office of the Attorney General. Dr. Theodore Parran and former First Judicial District Attorney Angela Spence Pacheco will also present.

To register for the free training being held on January 11, please contact Tamarra Howard with the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General at (505) 717-3506 or [thoward@nmag.gov](mailto:thoward@nmag.gov).

This training is made possible by a grant from the State Attorney General Consumer and Prescriber Education Grant Program which is funded by the multi-state settlement of consumer fraud claims regarding the marketing of the prescription drug Neurontin.

Please see attached for the Opioid Abuse Training agenda.

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**NATIONAL ATTORNEYS GENERAL  
TRAINING & RESEARCH INSTITUTE**  
THE TRAINING & RESEARCH ARM OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL

**NAGTRI Opioid Abuse Training: Confronting the Crisis  
to Make New Mexico Families Safer**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
January 11, 2017

**Agenda**

- 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions-**  
*Attorney General Balderas*  
*Al Lama, NAAG Chief of Staff & Senior NAGTRI Program Counsel*
- 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Overview of Opioid Abuse Issues**  
*Lou Duran, Healing Addiction in our Community*  
*Chris Kohler, Special Agent, Office of the Attorney General of New Mexico*  
*Jennifer Weiss-Burke, Executive Director, Healing Addiction in our Community*
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. **Treatment Options and Issues**  
Medication Assisted Treatment  
*Dr. Theodore Parran, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine*  
Harm Reduction  
*Dominick Zurlo, Hepatitis and Harm Reduction Program Manager, New Mexico Department of Health*
- 11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Lunch (On your own)
- 1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. **Protecting Consumers**  
Medicaid Fraud  
*Patricia Tucker, Medicaid Fraud & Elder Abuse Division Director, Office of the Attorney General of New Mexico*  
Off-label Prescribing and Regulation of Prescribers  
*Jonathan Blanton, Chief of Consumer Protection, Office of the Attorney General of Ohio*

1:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

**Opioids and Dealing With Fraud**

Pill Mills

*Jonathan Blanton*

Making Use of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

*Dawn Hunter, Director, Office of Policy and Accountability, New Mexico Department of Health*

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Break

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Court Involvement and Beyond**

*Spence Pacheco, Former First Judicial District Attorney*

*Sean Waite, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration*

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Conclusion and Wrap Up