# Rise of Abuse of Painkillers Posing New Problems for Employers

News
4.11.16

The article, "Rise of Abuse of Painkillers Posing New Problems for Employers," featured on *1200 WOAI,* discussed how the rise of opiate painkillers as the drug of choice for drug abusers has left Texas workplaces flat footed.

Kevin Troutman said the reason is the pre-employment drug tests which have become mandatory for job applicants in a growing number of fields don't test for opiate abuse.

"Now we're seeing more and more abuse and more and more problems, with the abuse of legal drugs, and those would be opioids like hydrocodone and oxycodone," he said.

Kevin said the new wave of opioid drug abuse puts employers into two major binds. First of all, the pre-employment drug screening is mainly set to capture abuse of street drugs like marijuana and cocaine, and they don't detect opioids in the system. The second problem is that the painkillers are legal drugs, which makes it very difficult for employers to ban their use.

The people who become addicted to painkillers are far more likely to be in the workforce than abusers of street drugs, and Kevin said there needs to be a way that employers can protect themselves by successful identifying these drug abusers.

"Employers have to take a little more vigilance in educating their employees, and coming up with programs which will be more likely to catch the users of legal drugs," he said.

To read the full article, please visit *1200 WOAI*.

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