The White House heroin response strategy announced today, with a price tag of $13.4 million, will emphasize treatment as well as public safety. According to Reuters, Michael Botticelli, Director of National Drug Control Policy, said the new plan will address the heroin and painkiller epidemics as both "a public health and a public safety issue."

CSG’s webcast, “Needle-Borne Disease and Substance Abuse,” Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 2 p.m. EDT, will provide timely context and background on the issues the White House program strives to address. The surge of prescription opioid abuse in southern Indiana precipitated an HIV epidemic in that state earlier this year.

Areas of the nation facing severe heroin issues will be targeted by the new federal initiative, according to USA Today. They are designated counties in Connecticut, Delaware, D.C., Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia. Of the total $13.4 million designated for the new initiative, $2.5 million is targeted for the corridor from Virginia to Maine.

Already, some have criticized the Obama administration for depending too heavily on arrest and incarceration policies. Critics of the national drug policy, quoted by USA Today, called the new program "one step forward, two steps back."

The CSG webcast, Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 2 p.m. EDT, will describe the surge of prescription opioid abuse in southern Indiana that precipitated an HIV epidemic in that state earlier this year. The Indiana governor and legislature enacted policy measures during this year’s session. Effectiveness research on treating IV substance abuse will be reviewed – helping policy makers understand what strategies are most likely to reverse increased addiction and overdose. Register here.

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