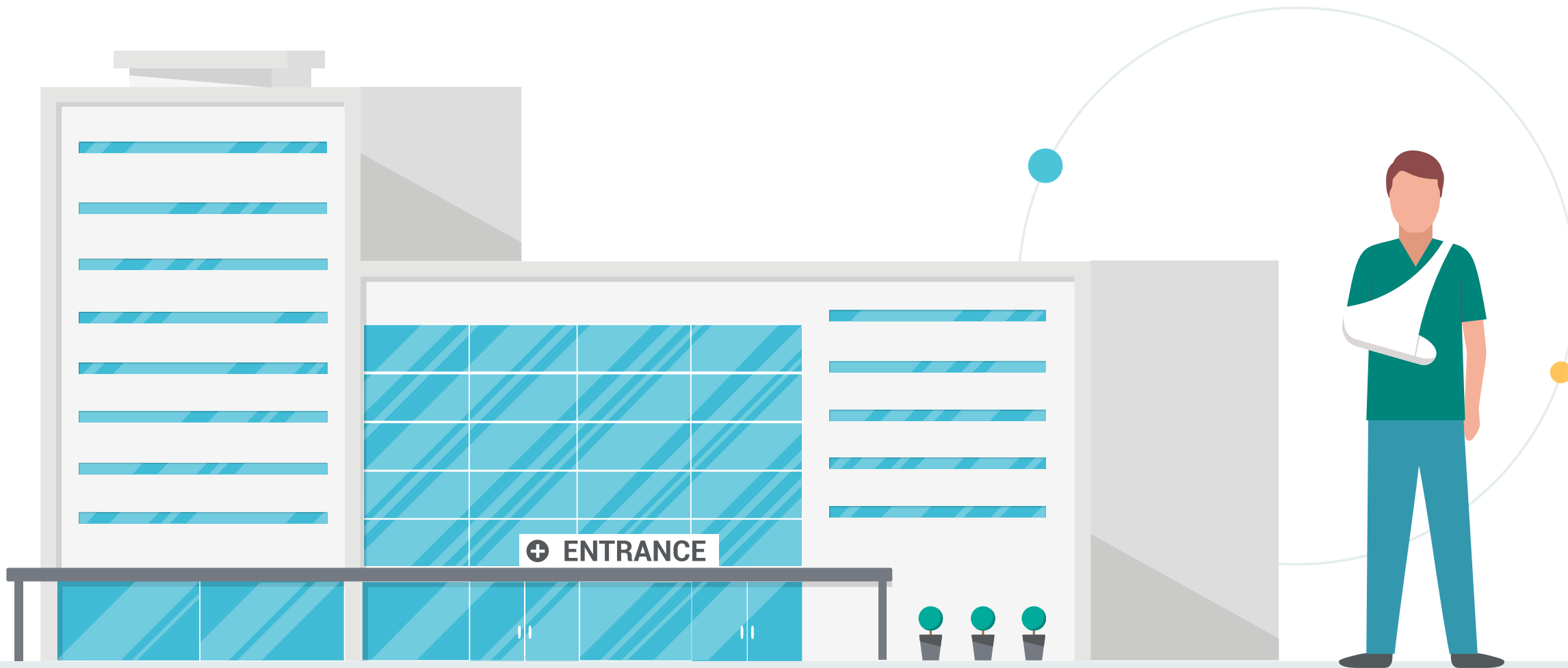


Combating the Opioid Epidemic in Healthcare Facilities and Communities

Diversion Risk in Healthcare Facilities

Opioids are often an effective and important part of patient care and pain management, and healthcare organizations have made strides in addressing the risks involved in prescribing opioids. However, there are other considerations to keep in mind when combatting the opioid epidemic related to how controlled substances are stored, administered, and disposed of. Each of these steps in handling opioids provides opportunities for drug diversion, taking controlled substances for illegal distribution, or illicit use.

To help prevent the diversion of controlled substances, both inventory and wastage, during disposal, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has established requirements, including security controls and procedures, that must be followed by those involved in the distribution chain, including dispensers. Healthcare facilities are generally prohibited from accepting controlled substances back from patients after they have been dispensed. Instead, ultimate users should be directed to authorized drug take-back programs (kiosks, designated events, or mail-back packages).



The Opioid Epidemic at a Glance

Over
1.2M
PEOPLE
began pain reliever misuse in 2020.¹

More than
HALF
OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS
surveyed believe that improperly disposed
pharmaceutical waste is one of the biggest
contributors to the opioid epidemic.²

More than
100,000
AMERICANS DIED FROM DRUG OVERDOSES
in 2021, a 28.5% increase from the prior year.³

Visit [Stericycle.com](https://www.stericycle.com) to learn more about ways to help combat the opioid epidemic with disposal options for healthcare facilities and communities.