

# 34221 Avoiding the Bleeding Edge of the Opioid Epidemic: A Tale of Using Seized Drugs, DUID, and Postmortem Cases to Keep the Laboratory at the Front-Line

2020 AACC Annual Scientific Meeting & Clinical Lab Expo - Chicago, IL

12/16/2020 2:00 PM Until 12/16/2020 4:30 PM

**Session Type:** Scientific Session

**ACCENT Credit Hours:** 2.5

**Session Level:** Advanced

**Session Overview:** This session will focus on the expectations and skills needed for laboratory professionals positioned at the forefront of the opioid epidemic. An overview of vital surveillance efforts, analytical techniques, the positive impact of private/public partnerships, and available mechanisms for information sharing will be provided.

**Needs Assessment:** In recent years, there have been a staggering number of outbreaks related to the onslaught of new drugs in the illicit marketplace, resulting in a large number of hospitalizations and death. Commonly referred to as "research chemicals," "designer drugs," or "novel psychoactive substances" (NPS), these substances are used for their pharmacological effects similar to widely known drugs (Kacinko SL, Papsun DM. The Evolving Landscape of Designer Drugs. *Methods Mol Biol.* 2019;1872:129-135). The public recognition of an opioid epidemic has led to numerous calls to action and a need for collaboration between laboratories, public health and law enforcement agencies to monitor the appearance of new compounds and enable laboratories to be prepared with validated tests to detect these compounds in seized drugs and biological specimens (Morrow, J. B., Ropero-Miller, J. D., Catlin, M. L., Winokur, A. D., Cadwallader, A. B., Staymates, J. L., Goldberger, B. A. (2018). The Opioid Epidemic: Moving Toward an Integrated, Holistic Analytical Response. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology*, 43(1), 1-9.) Laboratory professionals are often cited as a critical component to combating the opioid crisis though the skills and knowledge required to lead such an effort change as fast the compounds themselves. This session will provide an overview of how the laboratory plays this vital role and bring awareness to the focus and dedication required to stay at the leading edge to address this fast changing epidemic.

**Intended Audience:** This session is intended for laboratory and public health professionals interested and/or actively engaged in toxicological testing, patient care, drug surveillance, and research in the area of novel psychoactive substances and the epidemiology of the opioid crisis.

**Learning Objectives:** After this session, participants will be able to: 1) Explain the efforts required to comprehensively track and identify the emergence of novel psychoactive substances.  
2) Describe the workflows required and technology available to identify and properly design testing for novel psychoactive substances.  
3) Summarize the requirements to turn available and disparate data into actionable intelligence.

**Expected Outcome:** After this session, participants will be able to: 1) Explain the efforts required to comprehensively track and identify the emergence of novel psychoactive substances.  
2) Describe the workflows required and technology available to identify and properly design testing for novel psychoactive substances.  
3) Summarize the requirements to turn available and disparate data into actionable intelligence.

**Speakers:**

Donna Papsun, MS, ABFT, NMS Labs

NPS Surveillance: Tracking and Responding to Emerging Trends

Alex Krotulski, PhD, CFSRE

Keeping Pace: Leveraging Private and Public Partnerships to Enhance Chemical Identification of NPS in Seized Drug and Toxicological Casework for Optimal Test Development

Frederick Strathmann, PhD, MBA, DABCC, NMS Labs

Right Test at the Right Time: Making the Data Accessible and Testing Actionable

**Related Topics:**

Toxicology & Therapeutic Drug Monitoring

Analytic Techniques & Applications