

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **THE OPIOID CRISIS: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES, ACKNOWLEDGING THE CHALLENGES, AND EXPLORING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

**WASHINGTON, DC (FEBRUARY 22, 2019)**— On September 25, 2018, AHLA hosted a convener session at American University’s Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C. to address the national crisis of opioid-related harm. Twenty experts from around the country gathered for a day-long meeting to identify the most pressing issues and discuss possible solutions. The participants included representatives from federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice; health insurance payers; professors and physicians from major academic medical centers; advocacy organizations and trade associations for physicians, pharmacists and other professionals; first responders; state health agencies; and health law attorneys.

[The Opioid Crisis: Understanding the Complexities, Acknowledging the Challenges, and Exploring Possible Solutions](#) white paper captures the major themes and recurring issues that convener participants discussed and debated during the day-long session. It also offers a range of feasible and practical options and solutions that political leaders, community activists, and patient advocates may want to consider and tailor to the current needs of their communities.

“AHLA’s dedication to serving the public interest is central to the organization’s mission of leading health law to excellence through education, information, and dialogue,” remarks Asha B. Scielzo, AHLA Board Member and Associate Director, Health Law & Policy Program at American University’s Washington College of Law. “I am pleased that the convener participants found the session to be very valuable and that AHLA is making The Opioid Crisis white paper available to the public, along with additional resources on its newly-created Health Law Hub: Opioid Crisis.”

For supplemental information and reference material that delves more deeply into many of the issues addressed at the convener session about the opioid crisis, please refer to the [Health Law Hub: Opioid Crisis](#) on AHLA’s website.

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### **About AHLA Conveners:**

AHLA hosts nonpartisan expert panel convener sessions in order to provide a neutral forum for the frank and candid exchange of views and analyses among invited experts on select health care policy issues that have a clear legal nexus. White papers and supplemental resources often result from these convener sessions. These sessions underscore AHLA’s commitment to promote a better understanding of health care issues and to encourage constructive dialogue among all affected industry stakeholders, government, academia, and the lay community.

Convener participants present their individual viewpoints on the subject; AHLA does not fact check, critique or comment upon any of the statements or proposals made by any participants at convener sessions. Our intention is, instead, to objectively report the salient points made by the convener participants so that the reader can have the benefit of the unfiltered discussion from that day.



**About AHLA:**

The mission of AHLA is to provide a collegial forum for interaction and information exchange to enable its members to serve their clients more effectively; to produce the highest quality non-partisan educational programs, products, and services concerning health law issues; and to serve as a public resource on selected health care legal issues. For more information, visit [www.healthlawyers.org](http://www.healthlawyers.org).