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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Schimel Holds First Task Force on Elder Abuse Meeting; Announces “A Dose of Reality” for Seniors and Caregivers

MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel held the first meeting of the Attorney General’s Task Force on Elder Abuse and is offering a *Dose of Reality* to [seniors and their caregivers](#) on the dangers of misusing opioid and narcotic pain medications.

“Here’s a dose of reality: just last year, more than 4,000 Wisconsin residents aged 55 or older were hospitalized for opioid dependence or prescription opioid poisoning¹,” said Attorney General Schimel. “As this task force works together to protect Wisconsin’s growing senior population from abuse and exploitation, we are already deploying important messages to seniors and caregivers about how to protect themselves from accidental overdose and becoming targets of those struggling with addiction.”

“As Wisconsin’s aging population grows, we want to make sure older residents avoid the injury and suffering that can come from misusing medications, or from being abused or neglected,” said DHS Secretary Linda Seemeyer. “DHS looks forward to working with the Department of Justice and our other partners on these important issues.”

[Dose of Reality](#), is a statewide prevention campaign designed to raise awareness about prescription drug abuse and its effect on the opioid epidemic. The campaign was launched in September 2015, and has prevention messages for the medical community, students, coaches, parents, educators, and employers. This new message for seniors and caregivers, which was created through a partnership with the

¹ Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), will include information and resources unique to seniors and caregivers, including posters and flyers for senior centers and elder healthcare facilities. Anyone can download these free materials and share with their community at doseofrealitywi.gov/program-materials.

The Attorney General's Task Force on Elder Abuse, which was announced in August 2017, met for the first time on October 9. The task force discussed how prosecutors, protective services, law enforcement, and long term care services come into contact with elders experiencing abuse, and how these groups can work together in the future.

The task force is charged with compiling the resources and knowledge of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals to study the impact of elder abuse in Wisconsin and assess ways to improve outcomes for this growing population of citizens. In addition to developing strategies to address barriers in investigation and prosecutions of elder abuse, the task force will strengthen consumer protection for seniors and create recommendations for improved cross-system communications.

To report suspected financial, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, please [contact your county elder adult-at-risk agency](#). If you witness an act of abuse, neglect, or exploitation that requires immediate attention, please call 911.