SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Advertisement

English Edition ▼ Print Edition Video Audio Latest Headlines More ▼ Latest World Business U.S. Politics Economy Tech Markets & Finance Opinion Arts Lifestyle Real Estate Personal Finance Health Style Sports

> 9 Things Investors with \$1M+ **Should Know About Annuities** Fisher Investments



Aramco

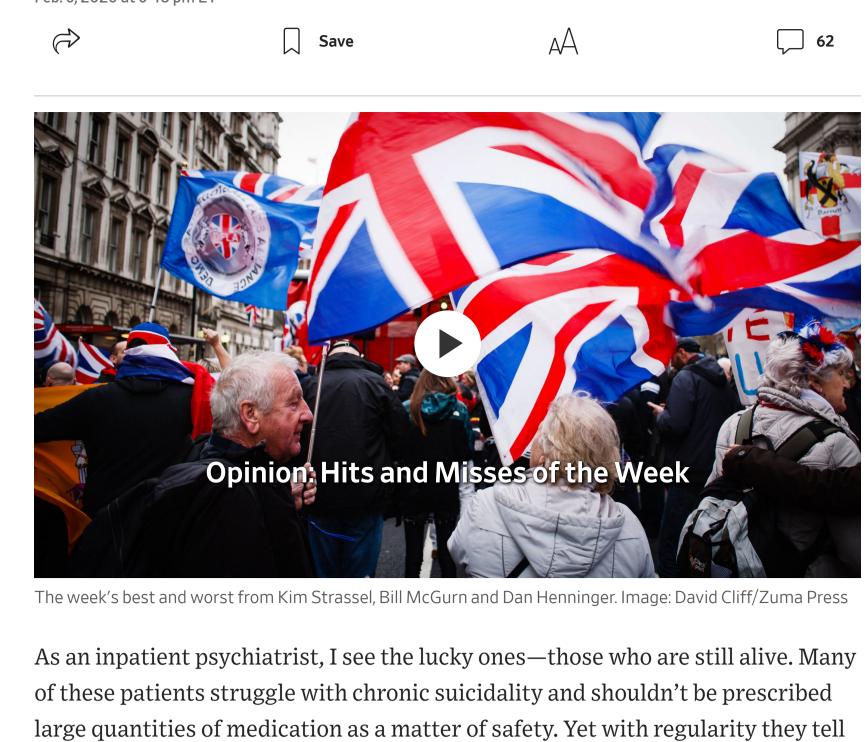
The circular carbon economy

The 90-Day Prescription Isn't for Everyone

OPINION COMMENTARY Follow

Pharmacies and insurers push it over physicians' warnings.

By Brian Barnett Feb. 6, 2020 at 6:48 pm ET



encountering it frequently when prescribing. Intentional overdose is the most common method of attempting suicide in the

me their insurers wouldn't pay for smaller amounts. I know this problem well,

U.S., and the third most common cause of suicide, resulting in 6,554 deaths in 2017. It's also on the rise, especially among youths. From 2010 to 2018 the annual number of intentional overdoses rose 299% among 10- to 12-year-olds and 126% among 13- to 15-year-olds. Psychiatric drugs play an outsize role in intentional overdoses. Antidepressants, for example, contribute to 45% of suicides involving prescription drugs.

One of the most important

interventions physicians make to

that make them prone to impulsive

overdoses. Prescribing conservative

prevent suicide is limiting the

quantities of medication prescribed to patients at risk. This is particularly true for psychiatrists, who routinely treat people who have attempted suicide or have conditions

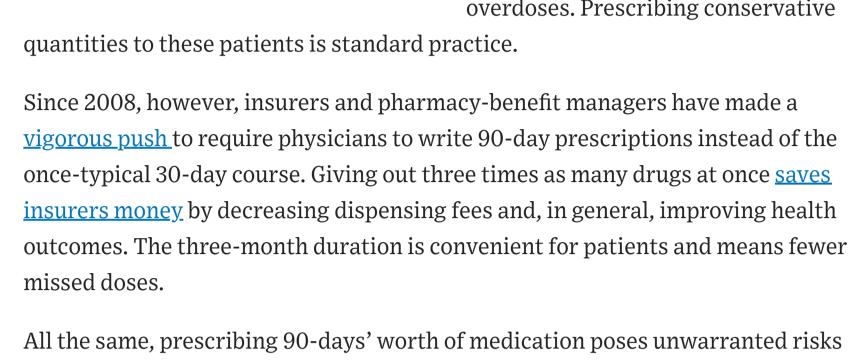


PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

ignored.

Physicians must make repeated phone calls and faxes, diverting valuable time away from patient care—and even still, insurers frequently deny our requests for lesser quantities. In 2012 the American Psychiatric Association formally asked insurers to allow physicians flexibility in determining medication quantities. Few listened and the scope of the problem has only grown.

Many U.S. states, including West Virginia and Ohio, now allow pharmacists to

discretion. In some states, physicians can prevent this by writing "dispense as

written" on the prescription. But in large chain pharmacies across the country,

prescriptions to 90-day supplies. As a result, these instructions are routinely

convert 30-day prescriptions with refills to 90-day prescriptions at their

staff members are <u>under pressure</u> from employers to convert customer

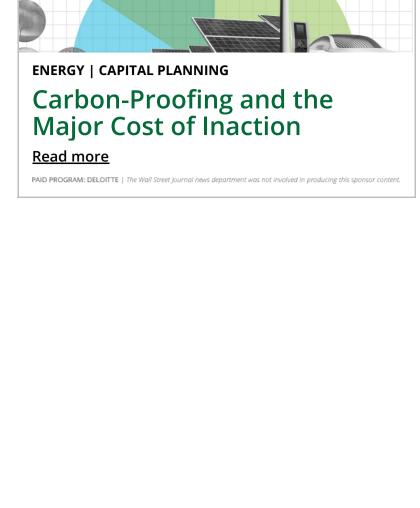
for potentially suicidal patients. Yet few insurers have streamlined processes for

physicians to obtain insurance coverage for smaller medication quantities.

That such an obvious problem hasn't attracted more attention from insurers or lawmakers suggests that mental health is still an afterthought for too many. That's unfortunate—and irresponsible. Reducing health-care expenditures is important, but costs can be trimmed without putting patients' lives in jeopardy. Advertisement

Dr. Barnett is a psychiatrist at the Cleveland Clinic. Appeared in the February 7, 2020, print edition.

SHOW CONVERSATION (62) V



Executive Perspectives

Deloitte.

a Problem for Bosses This Once Hot Real-

Estate Type Is Now

Behind Matthew

Opinion: Hamas

Israel Is Blamed

Opinion: Kamala Harris's McJob

Murders Six Hostages,

Opinion: Welcome to Canada, the Doctor Will Kill You Now

Perry's Deadly Trade

Being Offered as Office

Workplace, and That's

MOST POPULAR NEWS

Really Bullish on

Feeling Suddenly

Older? Scientists See

Aging 'Waves' at 44

Young People Are

Taking Over the

Stocks

and 60

Space

Americans Are Really,

With L.A.'s 'Ketamine Queen' MOST POPULAR OPINION

Opinion: Big Brother Is Teaching You Opinion: Trump's Marijuana Misstep

RECOMMENDED VIDEOS

Trading and Social Media Charles Schwab The A.I. "Millionaire Maker" Stocks. 5 Stocks To Soar Amid Al Boom

3 Things to Know Before

Retiring With \$1,000,000

ADVERTISEMENT

Profitable News

Fisher Investments

Everyone Needs in Their Portfolio Wealthy Retirement

The 5 Dumbest Things We Keep Spending Too Much Money On The Penny Hoarder

District of Columbia: The List

Of The Top Financial Advisor

12 Must-Own Dividend Stocks

Firms I...

smartasset

Dianomi

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. **English Edition** ▼ **Customer Service Customer Center** Contact Us

Cancel My Subscription

Tools & Features Newsletters & Alerts Guides **Topics** My News **RSS Feeds** Video Center Watchlist Podcasts **Visual Stories**

Dow Jones Newswires

BigCharts

Financial News

Place a Classified Ad **Sell Your Business** Sell Your Home Recruitment & Career Ads Digital Self Service App Store

MarketWatch

Commercial Real Estate Ads

Ads

Advertise

Mansion Global

Corrections Jobs at WSJ **News Archive** Register for Free Reprints & Licensing **Buy Issues** WSJ Shop **Dow Jones Press Room Dow Jones Smart Money** Risk & Compliance

More

About Us

Content Partnerships

Dow Jones Products Barron's

a Dow Jones company

WSJ Membership

The Journal Collection

Subscription Options

Corporate Subscriptions

WSJ High School Program

Public Library Program

Commercial Partnerships

WSJ Live

WSJ Higher Education Program

Why Subscribe?

Buy Side from WSJ WSJ Pro WSJ Video WSJ Wine The Times Privacy Notice | Cookie Notice | Copyright Policy | Data Policy | Terms of Use | Your Ad Choices | Accessibility Copyright ©2024 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Thanks for reading WSJ. Subscribe to get unlimited digital access.

Factiva

SUBSCRIBE

BACK TO TOP *

Sign Out

Hannah Baham ▼