Strategies to Reduce the Harm of Prescription Drug Misuse
Findings from the Research Literature

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**Objectives**

- Define the core components of strategies to prevent both fatal and nonfatal overdose from prescription drugs
- Identify potential advantages and disadvantages of strategies to reduce the harm of prescription drugs
- Describe the need for developing a comprehensive approach to reducing the non-medical use of prescription drugs and preventing overdoses
Preventing Prescription Drug Misuse: Strategies from the Research Literature

Strategies to Reduce Demand (4/13)

Strategies to Reduce Supply (4/27)

Strategies to Reduce Harm (Today)

Presenters

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Strategies to Prevent the Non-medical Use of Prescription Drugs

- Patient Education
- Prescriber Education
- Social Marketing Campaigns
- Information Dissemination Campaigns

Strategies to Prevent Supply
- Prescriber Education
- Tracking and Monitoring
- Retail Access Restrictions
- Enforcement Strategies
- Storage and Disposal

Strategies to Prevent Demand

Strategies to Prevent Harm
- Naloxone Education and Distribution
- Overdose Education
- Prescriber Education

Desired Outcomes Associated with Preventing NMUPD and Opioid Overdose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Demand</th>
<th>Harm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decreasing availability</td>
<td>Preventing dependence and misuse</td>
<td>Reducing nonfatal and fatal overdose</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Example Risk Factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prescription opioid diversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple prescriber episodes (“doctor shopping”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inappropriate prescribing (“pill mills”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about potential dangers of prescription opioid misuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental health disorders</td>
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<td>Chronic pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of tolerance</td>
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<td>Polysubstance use and misuse</td>
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A Note About Evidence

- There is less evidence for NMUPD prevention strategies (compared to strategies for preventing other substances).
- A lack of evidence does not mean that a strategy is ineffective.
- Practitioners should rely on experience working with other substances.
- It is important for practitioners to collect evaluation data to build the evidence around strategies.
Strategies to Reduce the *Harm* of Prescription Drug Misuse

Findings From the Research Literature

Defining Harm Reduction Strategies

Efforts aimed at decreasing fatal and nonfatal overdoses from both prescription and illicit opioids (such as heroin).
Overdose Deaths Involving Opioids, by Type of Opioid, 1999-2015

Harm Reduction Strategies: Three Categories

Prescriber Education

Overdose Education

Naloxone Education & Distribution
Is your state, tribe, jurisdiction, or community currently implementing any harm reduction strategies?

Prescriber Education$^{3,4,5,6}$

Involves teaching prescribers:

- How to recognize an individual at risk
- When/how to refer a patient to treatment
- How to talk to patients about the danger of overdose
- About using tools to identify cases of poly-substance use
- About strategies to prevent overdose deaths
Overdose Prevention Strategies that Involve Prescribers\textsuperscript{7,8}

- Prescribing naloxone to patients at increased risk of overdose
- Writing third-party naloxone prescriptions to family members and peers

For More Information

For more information on venues and delivery methods for prescriber education, visit https://captconnect.edc.org/ to access the materials from the first webinar in this series.
Potential Advantages and Challenges

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<tr>
<td>• Potentially cost-effective</td>
<td>• Target population can be busy and difficult to reach</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Opportunity to inform prescribers about new best practices (e.g., guidelines and alternatives to habit-forming medications)</td>
<td>• More effective when used by all prescribers and pharmacists</td>
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<td>• Implementation may require a prescriber or recognized medical expert to implement</td>
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Overdose Education$^{9,10,11}$

Involves teaching groups close to the problem:

• How to prevent overdoses from occurring
• How to recognize when an individual is at risk for overdose
• How to recognize when an overdose is occurring
• How to appropriately respond to an overdose
• Laws relevant to overdoses (such as Good Samaritan laws)
Potential Audiences for Overdose Education Strategies

- Health Care Professionals
- People Who use Prescription Opioids Medically
- Professional First Responders
- People Who Use Opioids Illicitly
- Family Members of People Who Use Opioids Illicitly

Law Enforcement Training on Harm Reduction

Involves preparing law enforcement to better respond to and prevent drug overdoses. Topics include:

- Purpose of harm-reduction training
- Foundational information on prescription drugs and other opioids
- Signs and symptoms of an overdose
- Purpose of naloxone, how it works, and how to administer it
Overdose Education for People Who Use Drugs\textsuperscript{18,19,20,21,22,23}

Informs people who use drugs about:

- Behaviors that increase overdose risk (such as change in tolerance, mixing substances)
- How to recognize when an overdose is occurring
- Steps to take when witnessing an overdose

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Good Samaritan Education\textsuperscript{24}

- Intended to raise awareness of Good Samaritan laws and policies, and the specific protections they provide, and build confidence in them.
- Audiences include:
  - Law enforcement and criminal justice professionals
  - Members of the drug-using community
  - Lay first responders
## Potential Advantages and Challenges

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| • Can raise awareness of dangers of opioid misuse  
• Can be combined with naloxone distribution | • Warning about dangerous substances on the market can lead individuals with dependence to seek out other harmful substances  
• Good Samaritan laws are only effective if both law enforcement and potential 9-1-1 callers are educated  
• Good Samaritan laws and policies are not present in all states  
• Accessing people who use drugs (and their friends/families) can be challenging |
What is Naloxone?


Naloxone Education and Distribution\textsuperscript{25,26,27}

- Naloxone distribution programs provide access to naloxone to individuals at risk for overdose and first responders who may witness an overdose
- Naloxone education informs the following populations of the role of naloxone in preventing overdoses:
  - Prescribers and dispensers
  - Potential first responders (both lay and professional)
  - Broader community
State Naloxone Access Laws\textsuperscript{28,29}

- Allow naloxone to be prescribed/dispensed to:
  - substance users with documented risk factors for overdose
  - lay administrators (nonmedical first responders, potential overdose bystanders, family and friends of opioid users)

Types of Naloxone Access

- Traditional prescriptions
- Third-party prescriptions
- Collaborative practice agreements
- Standing orders
- Protocol orders
Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Programs\textsuperscript{27,29,30,31,32,33}

- Overdose education and naloxone distribution (OEND) programs provide training on:
  - recognizing and preventing opioid overdoses
  - how to administer naloxone.
- Program participants are also provided prescriptions for naloxone.

Potential Audiences for OEND Programs

- Mental health centers
- Treatment facilities (including methadone clinics)
- Homeless shelters
- Veterans’ Affairs facilities
- People who use opioids (and their family and friends)
- Professional and lay first responders
- Broader community
Project Lazarus addresses drug overdose deaths, with a focus on prescription drug overdoses. Its overdose prevention program includes:

- Community activation and coalition building
- Monitoring and epidemiological surveillance
- Prescriber, patient, and law enforcement training and education
- Overdose reversal medication

Potential Advantages and Challenges

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| • Reduces rates of overdose deaths  
• When naloxone is administered by a professional first responder, individuals who use drugs can be referred to services  
• The education component of these strategies promotes proper use of naloxone | • Can reduce fatalities but not the underlying substance use disorders  
• Prevention practitioners may face critiques that giving naloxone to people who use drugs could encourage further use |
Additional Strategies to Note

Efforts to Connect Individuals to Treatment

• Increase access and connect individuals to treatment for substance use disorders, especially medication-assisted treatment (MAT).
• MAT involves integrating medications (e.g., methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone) in conjunction with behavioral therapies and counseling to treat opioid addiction.

https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment
Strategies to Reduce Non-opioid Prescription Overdoses

• Antidotes (e.g., Flumazenil for benzodiazepine overdoses)
• Guidance for prescribers (e.g., risks associated with mixing prescriptions)
• Safe storage recommendations to prevent accidental poisonings

Participant Questions
A Comprehensive Approach to Reduce NMUPD and Opioid Overdose

Selection as Part of a Strategic Process

Sustainability and Cultural Competence
Developing a Comprehensive Approach to Reducing NMUPD and Opioid Overdose

Anytown, U.S.

Comprehensive Approach: Example

Problem: Anytown experienced high rates of opioid overdose over the past five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors for Anytown</th>
<th>Strategies for Anytown</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about potential dangers of prescription opioid misuse</td>
<td>Social marketing campaign</td>
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<td>Inappropriate prescribing</td>
<td>Prescriber education</td>
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<td>Polysubstance use</td>
<td>Overdose education</td>
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What NMUPD prevention strategies are you currently implementing or interested in implementing?

- Patient education
- Prescriber education
- Social marketing campaigns
- Information dissemination campaigns
- Tracking and monitoring
- Retail access restrictions
- Enforcement strategies
- Proper storage and disposal
- Overdose education
- Naloxone education and distribution

Where to Find Out More
Resources on Strategies to Reduce the Harm of Prescription Drug Misuse
SAMHSA Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit

- Facts for Community Members
- Five Essential Steps for First Responders
- Information for Prescribers
- Safety Advice for Patients & Family Members
- Recovery from Opioid Overdose

Available at store.samhsa.gov

Revised NMUPD Decision Support Tools

- Overview of Factors and Strategies
- Understanding Who is at Risk
- Programs and Strategies

Available at samhsa.gov/capt/
Revised NMUPD Decision Support Tools (cont.)

Example: Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Programs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Programs</th>
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<td>Description</td>
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Online Portal of Environmental Strategies

Environmental Strategies to Prevent the Non-medical Use of Prescription Drugs

This guide includes information gathered from existing research and practice that can guide environmental strategies that aim to reduce non-medical use of prescription drugs. For each strategy, the guide includes information on: (1) the populations for which the original strategy was designed; (2) evaluation outcomes that provide evidence of effectiveness, and additional resources (e.g., links to additional guidelines) for readers.

May 2016

Available to CSAP prevention grantees at captconnect.edc.org/
Example: State Naloxone Access Laws

State Naloxone Access Laws

Description: State naloxone laws allow the prescribing and dispensing of naloxone (an opioid receptor antagonist that reverses opioid overdose) to substance users with documented risk factors for overdose, or to lay administrators (including nonmedical first responders, potential overdose bystanders, and family and friends of opioid users).

Objective(s): To increase access to opioid overdose antidotes among high-risk populations.

Typical Elements: Naloxone access laws vary by state and can include some or all of the following provisions (Davis, 2015; National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws [NAMSDL], 2015):

- Permission for naloxone “standing order” prescriptions for individuals who are at risk for overdose and who have not been physically examined by a prescriber (Davis, 2015, p. 1).

Populations: Opioid users, physicians, emergency responders, police, policymakers, the general public.

Outcomes:

- Among opioid users, awareness of naloxone access laws was associated with greater use of naloxone in the event of an overdose (Banta-Green, Kozlowski, Coffin, & Schoeppe, 2011).
- A meta-analysis of 12 evaluations of naloxone access programs found that the programs were associated with (1) successful training of both individuals at high risk of an overdose and their friends and family to recognize an opioid overdose and appropriately administer naloxone, and (2) no increase in drug use or high-risk behavior (Haglerich, Pausacker, Manns, & Jonas, 2014).

Addressing Opioid Overdose: Understanding Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies

Available to webinar participants at the conclusion of today’s event (and at captconnect.edc.org/)
Example: Harm Reduction Strategies

HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Harm reduction strategies focus on reducing fatality rates by targeting individuals who are at high risk for overdose—this case, current users of opioids or heroin. Harm reduction strategies often entail enactment of policies that provide access to antidotes (such as naloxone), implemented in conjunction with other efforts to reduce non-fatal overdose, such as overdose education and naloxone distribution programs. Many of these policies, such as Good Samaritan Laws, also protect against legal repercussions of use.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO ANTIDOTES.

Antidotes exist, which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. One common antidote is naloxone. Naloxone, commonly sold under the brand names Narcan and Evzio, and generically from Amphastar Pharmaceuticals, Hospira, and Mylan, are opioid antagonists—medications that block the body’s opioid receptors to prevent interactions with opioid drugs.54, 55 This blockage can halt an overdose before its potentially fatal symptoms, such as respiratory depression, take full effect.56 Naloxone is:

- Designed to restart breathing, not necessarily make a person completely alert and awake;

Implementing Strategies to Prevent NMUPD and Opioid Overdose

Upcoming opportunities and resources:

- National webinars
- Peer sharing/learning communities on implementation challenges and best practices
- Stories and videos from practitioners
The CAPT is Here to Help

<table>
<thead>
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<th>CAPT Resource Team</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
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Contact Information

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Evaluation

Please take the time to complete a brief feedback form:
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References


References


References


