



MOON Study

Maximizing Opioid safety with Naloxone

Background

Opioids are medications used for treating pain or for treating opioid problems, but these medications and illicit forms of opioids, like heroin, can cause severe breathing problems, and even death by overdose. Unfortunately, we are experiencing an epidemic of overdose in the United States, with more people dying of overdose than from motor vehicle crashes. Because so many of these overdose deaths involve opioid medications and illicit opioids like heroin, distribution of the opioid overdose antidote called naloxone, is a major part of public health efforts to reduce deaths. **Research shows us that increasing the availability of naloxone in a community saves lives.** In Rhode Island and Massachusetts, the laws were changed to give pharmacists the authority to initiate a prescription for naloxone and distribute it directly to patients, without the patient having to first see a prescriber for the antidote. In both states, pharmacists have been trained and most pharmacies can provide naloxone in this way to anyone.

Purpose

The purpose of the MOON study is to learn more about the barriers to naloxone access in the pharmacy, maximize opioid safety awareness, and increase distribution of naloxone through pharmacy-based initiatives.

Strategy

We will use a systems-level approach to reduce the harm of opioid-related adverse events. Pharmacy partners and the study team will work with local pharmacies in Rhode Island and Massachusetts to train staff, implement pharmacy-based naloxone programs, and strengthen existing systems (like state Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs) to help educate pharmacists and the public on opioid safety with naloxone.

Types of Naloxone



Intramuscular naloxone



Intranasal naloxone



Additional Details

- *Study Institutions:* Boston Medical Center, Rhode Island Hospital
- *Pharmacy Partners:* CVS/Pharmacy, Baker Pharmacy, Eaton Apothecary, BMC Shapiro Pharmacy, Lifespan Outpatient Pharmacy
- *Funding Source(s):* Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

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Study Activities

Aim 1: Implementation Refinement

- Opioid Safety Advisory Group
- Public awareness and education, Public Awareness contest
- Focus groups
- Fidelity and implementation checks: pharmacist and patient surveys, crowd sourcing
- Technical assistance and educational outreach to healthcare providers

Aim 2: Determine successful pharmacy based naloxone

- Assess what structural characteristics of pharmacies and community characteristics have greater uptake

Aim 3: Impact of pharmacy based naloxone

- Evaluate naloxone dispensing, administration, treatment admissions, and emergency department visits due to opioid overdoses

Aim 4: Assess project sustainability and disseminate results

- Evaluate sustainability: staff, organization, process
- Use multiple sources and partners to disseminate findings