

EVALUATION OF THE WA PEER NALOXONE PROJECT – FIRST RESULTS

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Introduction and Aims: Since the mid-1990s, there have been calls to make naloxone available to heroin and other opioid users and their peers and family members to prevent overdose deaths. Beginning in 2012 small scale prescription naloxone demonstration programs were established in the ACT and subsequently in NSW, WA, SA and a more widespread program in Vic. This paper presents preliminary data from the evaluation of The WA Naloxone Peer Education project conducted by the West Australian Substance Users Association (WASUA) from 2012-15.

Design and Methods: This study employed a repeated-measure, mixed methods design. Some 150 participants underwent training to improve knowledge regarding harm reduction procedures related to opioid overdose and naloxone administration. They were assessed on opioid overdose and naloxone administration knowledge via a self-report survey at three time points: pre-training, immediately post-training, and at a scheduled follow-up 3-6 months later.

Results: Data available at the time of abstract submission on 117 pre-post assessments and 42 follow-up interviews found pre-post increases in knowledge regarding: Risks of overdose ($p<.001$); Signs of overdose ($p<.01$); Actions to manage overdose ($p<.05$); and naloxone administration ($p<.001$). Recognition of the need to call an ambulance in addition to naloxone administration increased from 59% of respondents at pre to 96% at post. Some 53% ($n=23$) of those followed up reported witnessing an overdose since receiving their naloxone kit and 78% ($n=18$) of these administered naloxone as part of the overdose management.

Discussion and Conclusions: Results support the efficacy and expansion of the WA peer naloxone program.

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