Impact of pharmacist provision of naloxone at an independent community pharmacy operating under state naloxone protocol.

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BACKGROUND

- In 2017, prescription opioids alone accounted for more than 47,000 deaths in the United States.1
- The CDC recommends that naloxone be considered for all patients receiving more than 50 morphine milli-equivalents (MME) per day.1
- While all 50 states have laws that expand access to naloxone through pharmacy dispensing, in 2018, naloxone was provided to only 1 in 69 (1.4%) of patients dispensed a high dose opioid.1
- A survey of pharmacies in a metropolitan area demonstrated that intranasal naloxone was available at 34% of pharmacies and more likely to be available from a chain pharmacy than an independent pharmacy.2

OBJECTIVES

- To determine if a standardized risk assessment by community pharmacists and subsequent offer to provide naloxone by protocol impacts naloxone possession rates among patients dispensed opioids.
- To identify factors associated with increased risk of opioid-related overdose that may be common among patients dispensed naloxone.

METHODS

- Inclusion criteria: Patients > 18 years old presenting a prescription for an opioid medication
- Exclusion criteria: Known allergy to naloxone
- Study period: November 1, 2018- February 28, 2019
- Control period: November 1, 2017- February 28, 2018
- Intervention: Offer to provide naloxone and naloxone use education (role of naloxone, signs of opioid overdose, how to administer naloxone) under SC joint protocol1
- Deidentified data from the study period was matched to a control period prior to initiation of the naloxone service to determine if community-pharmacy based naloxone dispensing improved the naloxone possession rate, (expressed as the percentage of patients dispensed an opioid prescription who also received naloxone.)
- Factors associated with increased risk of opioid-related overdose or respiratory depression were collected and reported with descriptive statistics.

RESULTS

Table 1. Medication possession rates

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Nov 2018-Feb 2019</th>
<th>Nov 2019-Feb 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patients receiving naloxone</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naloxone possession ratio (NPR)</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
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Figure 1. Risk factors among patients dispensed naloxone

Figure 2. Naloxone origin by prescriber credential.

CONCLUSIONS

- Naloxone dispensing under state protocol did improve naloxone possession rates among patients of the independent community pharmacy.
- This study is limited by its relatively small sample size.
- Results may not be generalized to a broader population. All patients who received naloxone during the study period were white and carried third-party insurance that covered naloxone. Cost was not cited by any patient as the reason for declining naloxone.
- While a similar service could be implemented at other independent community pharmacies, patient eligibility may differ as expanded access laws vary from state to state.
- While not quantified as part of this study, receptiveness varied between patients approached about naloxone. Additional research regarding patient perceptions of pharmacist provided naloxone is warranted.
- When considering risks associated with opioid medications, safe medication disposal could be a future growth opportunity for this service.

REFERENCES


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Disclosure

The authors of this presentation have nothing to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.