

Title: Providers' and pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding medication assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction and intranasal naloxone in Southcentral Foundation's Nuka system of care

Authors: Natalie Li, PharmD; Catherine Arnatt, PharmD, MS; Mike Beiergrohslain, PharmD, BCPS; Kristin Allmaras, PharmD; Joshua Crowe, PharmD, BCPS

Institution: Southcentral Foundation, Anchorage, Alaska

Abstract text:

Purpose:

According to the CDC, more than two million Americans are addicted to opioids. In order to treat this addiction, demand for medication assisted treatment and naloxone grows, requiring an increased need for education and support for healthcare teams. The purpose of this project is to assess primary care providers' and pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the use of buprenorphine and naltrexone to treat opioid addiction and the utilization of naloxone for opioid-overdose. We anticipate that the results can assist the institution in developing supplemental education, protocols, and additional supportive services that may enhance opioid addiction treatment at our facility.

Methods:

Study investigators designed a survey using a variety of questions (eg. Likert-like scale, multiple choice, true/false) to assess providers' and pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction and intranasal naloxone use for prevention of opioid overdose-related deaths. The survey was created using Survey Monkey, which was then distributed to providers and pharmacists through email. We received appropriate tribal permissions and human protections to disseminate the survey and collect survey responses. Responses generated through Survey Monkey were then analyzed using descriptive statistics in order to identify and distinguish providers' and pharmacists' perceptions regarding MAT.

Results:

The survey successfully identified providers' and pharmacists' levels of comfort regarding treatment of opioid addiction with the medications: buprenorphine, buprenorphine/naloxone, naltrexone tablet, naltrexone intramuscular injection, and naloxone. Additionally, the survey identified areas to enhance MAT and provision of naloxone at SCF through implementation of educational programs and creation of supportive services. The results indicated that 22 percent of physicians, 0 percent of physician assistants, 0 percent of nurse practitioners, 0 percent of psychiatrists, 14 percent of pharmacists, and 25 percent of nurse case managers are most comfortable with the "induction" aspect of MAT. Furthermore, 83 percent of physicians, 54 percent of physician assistants, 80 percent of nurse practitioners, 33 percent of psychiatrists, 64 percent of pharmacists, and 60 percent of nurse case managers feel most comfortable with the "maintenance" aspect of MAT. The survey also identified that 56 percent of providers and 88 percent of pharmacists are comfortable prescribing naloxone. From this data, it was discovered that on average, 76 percent of all disciplines agreed or strongly agreed for the need of further MAT education, and 74 percent of all disciplines agreed or strongly agreed for the need for further naloxone education. As a response to the survey questions, providers responded with suggestions for further education. From the answer choices, an inservice training was identified as the most preferred form of further education. Treatment protocols were identified as the most preferred tool to implement for enhancement of both MAT services and for naloxone provision.

Conclusion:

The results from the survey identified comfortable aspects of treatment and knowledge needs for providers and pharmacists regarding medication assisted treatment and provision of naloxone. From these results, identification of guidance tools that can enhance providers and pharmacists comfort providing medication assisted treatment and naloxone were discovered. Next steps will include but not be limited to:

- Providing and implementing education to primary care providers and pharmacists regarding naloxone and medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction.
- Creating guidance documents and tools to enhance opioid addiction services at SCF and meet provider and pharmacist needs.

AUTHOR DISCLOSURE PANEL: The authors of the abstract have no conflicts of interest to disclose.