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Evaluation of Pharmacists' Knowledge in Role of Naloxone Dispensing (Poster)

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Perez, Rachel and Kennedy, Samantha, "Evaluation of Pharmacists' Knowledge in Role of Naloxone Dispensing (Poster)" (2019). *Cooper Medical School of Rowan University Capstone Projects*. 23.
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INTRODUCTION

In response to the national opioid abuse and overdose crisis, New Jersey signed the Overdose Prevention Act (OPA) into law in May 2013, allowing pharmacists in New Jersey to provide naloxone without a prescription through a standing order (1,2). Naloxone blocks the effects of opioids and can be used acutely to reverse an overdose, preventing respiratory failure and death. Despite the OPA, pharmacist education regarding naloxone and its distribution is lacking. A preliminary survey of pharmacists in Camden County, the county known to be the epicenter of opioid abuse in New Jersey, showed that many pharmacists are not fully aware of the implications and details regarding prescribing naloxone. **Our goal was to determine if pharmacists in Camden County are aware of the OPA and stocking naloxone in their pharmacies for ready availability to patients in need, and would specific educational interventions improve pharmacists' knowledge and engagement.**

METHODS

1. Hosted free continuing education (CE) event for Camden County retail pharmacists with information regarding opioids, naloxone, and the OPA.
2. Anonymously surveyed Camden County pharmacists via in-person or phone surveys on their knowledge of the OPA and naloxone availability at their pharmacy.
3. Repeated steps 1 and 2 approximately 6 months after initial CE event.

Inclusion Criteria: Pharmacy in Camden County

Exclusion Criteria: Pharmacist declined to participate; pharmacy unable to be located or contacted

RESULTS

We successfully surveyed over 80% of pharmacies in Camden County during both survey periods. Of the 97 total included pharmacies in July 2017, 63% reported knowledge of the OPA and 62% reported carrying naloxone. In February 2018, after the second education event, 82% reported knowledge of the OPA and 80% reported carrying naloxone.

- Between 2017 and 2018, there were statistically significant increases in the number of pharmacists with knowledge of the OPA (p-value < 0.005) and the number of pharmacies carrying naloxone in stock (p-value < 0.005)
- In both 2017 and 2018, a statistically significant greater number of chain pharmacies had knowledge of the OPA as compared to independent pharmacies (p-value < 0.005)

Survey Response	2017		2018	
	Observed #	Chi-Square Statistic	Observed #	Chi-Square Statistic
Knowledge of OPA	61	1.25	79	1.26
Lack of knowledge of OPA	36	3.29	17	3.33
Chi-square	9.1207			
P-value	0.002527			

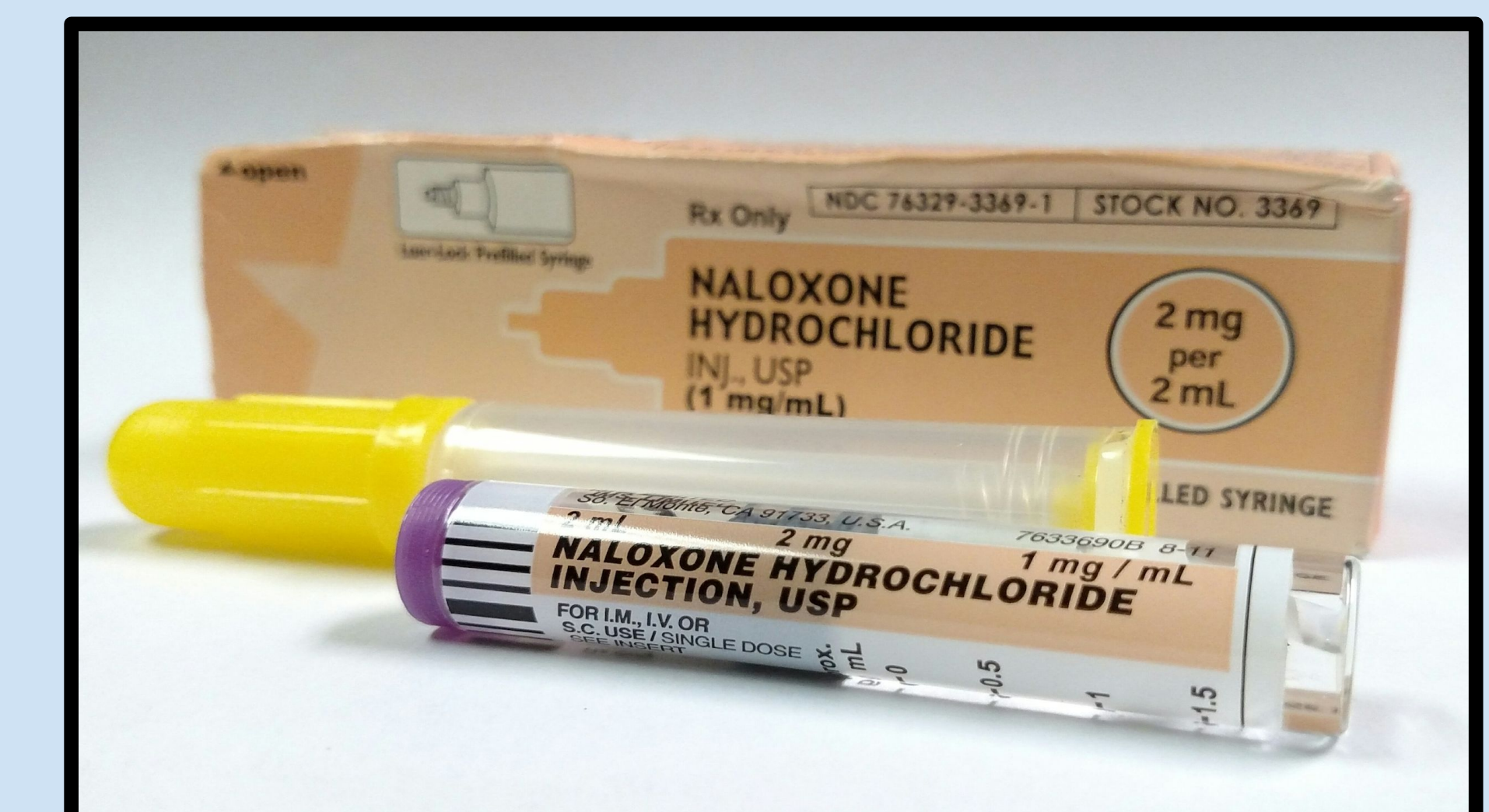


Photo source: American Society for Addiction Medicine

CONCLUSIONS

There was an **increase in pharmacist knowledge** of the OPA in the time between July 2017 and February 2018. Pharmacists working at **chain pharmacies were more likely** to be aware of the law and carry naloxone than those at independent pharmacies. The results may be generalizable due to the socioeconomic diversity of Camden County.

REFERENCES

1. Surgeon General's Advisory on Naloxone and Opioid Overdose. April 2018. <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/priorities/opioid-overdose-prevention/naloxone-advisory.html>. Accessed December 5, 2018.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2018 Annual Surveillance Report of Drug-Related Risks and Outcomes — United States. Surveillance Special Report 2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/pubs/2018-cdc-drug-surveillance-report.pdf>. Published August 31, 2018. Accessed December 5, 2018.