

North Carolina Nurses Association (NCNA) Position Statement on Simulation-Based Education to Respond to Opioid Overdose including Naloxone Administration Training in Academic and Practice Settings

This position statement does not imply endorsement of any piece of related legislation.

Issue

Increasing attention to the issue of prescription opioid misuse was recognized by the Surgeon General of the United States in the 2016 landmark report *Facing Addiction in America* (U. S. Department of Health & Human Services [USHHS], 2016). Some factors associated with the opioid crisis include inefficient prescribing and improper use; lack of knowledge related to interpretation and assessment of pain levels; and proper administration of naloxone. Several of these issues may be addressed through proper training of nurses and other healthcare providers. Despite the availability of effective treatments, most Americans do not receive evidence-based prevention and treatment services (NIH HEAL Initiative, 2018). Nurses need to be knowledgeable, embrace new guidelines, and understand the implications associated with both prescribing and administration of opioids. All health care providers need to learn how to respond to opioid overdose by administering reversal agents such as naloxone and appropriate follow-up – especially in community settings. Providing simulated training experiences will assist with widespread implementation of best practice in real-life experiences. All members of the interprofessional team, including staff nurses, physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and others must have a firm understanding of the improper use of opioids, and the ability to administer and educate the public about the administration of naloxone along with available resources (Jukiewicz, Alhofaian, Thompson & Gary, 2017).

Providing response and recovery training to all healthcare students and professionals will allow early intervention to reduce fatalities and promote healthier outcomes for those involved. Young people on college campuses with access to and involvement in collegiate recovery programs are demonstrating that successful sustainable recovery is possible, beginning at a very young age, when appropriate recovery resources are available following opioid overdose reversal (Averette, 2017).

Background

According to the 2017-2021 Opioid Action Plan for North Carolina Department of Public Health ([NCDPH], 2017) three people die each day due to opioid overdose. Unintentional opioid deaths have increased along with heroin and other synthetic narcotics from approximately 100 deaths in 1999 to over 1200 deaths in 2016. The North Carolina Nurses Association (NCNA) is one of many organizations addressing the opioid overdose epidemic, however more work needs to be done to train healthcare providers to prevent fatalities. Some measures set forth by the NCDPH include: Increasing community awareness and prevention; make naloxone widely available and link overdose survivors to care; expand treatment and recovery oriented systems of care; and measure our impact and revise strategies based on results. These measures can be addressed by a set of simulation activities designed to accomplish these very objectives in the academic and hospital setting where student nurses and practicing nurses can learn best practice techniques to administer naloxone and interact with the public at large. The Maryland Association of Nursing Students submitted the resolution, “Expanding the Number of Nursing Students Certified to Administer Narcan (Naloxone) Through Training Programs,” to the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) and it was approved in April 2017. In June 2018, the International Nursing

Association of Clinical Simulation and Learning Conference included a presentation which provided a validated simulated learning experience regarding the administration of naloxone (Coffey, Graham, Muirhead, et.al., 2018).

Beginning education of nurses during their academic years and continuing this training into their professional practice will increase not only awareness of the opioid overdose epidemic, but the ability of nurses to correctly administer reversal agents, treat, assist, and educate those who need help dealing with opioid misuse.

Recommendation:

The NCNA Simulation Council recommends that the NCNA Board of Directors approve a position statement that supports the use of simulation to train pre-professional nursing students, other health care professions students, and practicing clinicians on the physiology, signs and symptoms of overdose, interventions in response to overdose, epidemiology of the problem, and the proper use of naloxone.

Averette, M. (2017). Leading change and increasing awareness of best practice: Supporting recovery on college campuses. *Dean's Notes*, 39(1). 1-2. Retrieved from <http://www.ajj.com/sites/default/files/services/publishing/deansnotes/fall2017.pdf>

Coffey, Graham, Muirhead, de la Rocha, Chorney, Zitzelsberger, Anyinam, Papaconstantinou, Vogel, Vanderlee, Sun, & Ballantyne (2018). Saving lives with simulation-based learning: The opioid crisis. 2018 INACSL Conference Presentation.

Jukiewicz, D. A., Alhofaian, A., Thompson, Z. & Gary F. A. (2017). Reviewing opioid use, monitoring, and legislature: Nursing perspectives. *International Journal of Nursing Sciences*, 4. 430-436. Retrieved from https://ac.els-cdn.com/S2352013217300571/1-s2.0-S2352013217300571-main.pdf?_tid=3ac833b1-9f52-4182-b2f7-97081d9cf9db&acdnat=1521471234_c3523657fc3ee19d7518c4ae58eeb546

National Institute of Health HEAL Initiative. (2018). Helping to End Addiction Long-term. Retrieved from <https://www.nih.gov/research-training/medical-research-initiatives/heal-initiative>

North Carolina Department of Public Health. (2017). *North Carolina's opioid action plan*. Retrieved from <https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/NC%20Opioid%20Action%20Plan%208-22-2017.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (USHHS). (2016) *Facing addiction in America: The Surgeon General's report on alcohol, drugs, and health, executive summary*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/executive-summary.pdf>

Expanding the Number of Nursing Students Certified To Administer Naloxone (Narcan) Through Training Programs. (2017). Resolutions adopted by National Student Nurses Association House of Delegates, April 2017, p. 11. Retrieved from <https://www.dropbox.com/s/ocb5oi46ac64etg/NSNA%20Resolutions%202017.pdf?dl=0>

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