The Ontario Naloxone Program for Pharmacies

An evaluation of naloxone provision in Ontario, Canada

In June 2016, the Ontario Government introduced the Ontario Naloxone Program for Pharmacies (ONPP), authorizing community pharmacists across the province to provide injectable naloxone kits to all Ontario residents free of charge.

Why was this program implemented?

72,600 opioid-related deaths occurred in Canada and the United States in 2018 alone

90% of opioid-related deaths in Canada were accidental in 2018

Naloxone

an opioid antagonist that quickly and effectively reverses the effects of an opioid overdose

Gerogic variation

There are large variations in the rates of pharmacy-dispensed naloxone across the 35 public health units (PHUs) in Ontario

The overall pharmacy-dispensed naloxone rate across PHUs in Ontario is 5.5 kits per 1,000 population

14 PHUs 34% of the population have rates that are significantly higher than the provincial average

16 PHUs 59% of the population have rates that are significantly lower than the provincial average

Rates of pharmacy dispensed naloxone were higher in areas with:

- a supervised consumption site
- higher rates of opioid-related death

Individuals who received pharmacy dispensed naloxone were more likely to:

- be under the age of 65
- reside in an urban area
- have a prior history of opioid use disorder
- have received 11 or more opioid prescriptions in the past year
- be undergoing opioid agonist therapy (OAT) or receiving treatment with a non-OAT opioid

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