

2018 WNA Dialogue Forum Topic #3

The Opioid Epidemic in Wisconsin: Identifying WNA's Role

Topic to be addressed: The opioid epidemic continues in Wisconsin. Is there a more active role for WNA in supporting the reduction in opioid abuse and addiction from an advocacy, education, practice, workforce and leadership perspective?

Submitted by: WNA representatives to 2018 ANA Membership Assembly

Background on the topic (research, data, survey, etc.)

In 2013 the membership of the Wisconsin Nurses Association adopted a Reference that addressed the epidemic of prescription drug abuse in America with a focus on Wisconsin. A Task Force was developed and identified the role for WNA and registered nurses. A report with recommendations was disseminated to nurses and other key stakeholders. The report, *The Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic in Wisconsin* addressed a variety of topics that include enforcement, education, medication disposal, statewide prescription drug monitoring system and patient's "doctor shopping". Many of the recommendations have been adopted in Wisconsin through legislation.

As efforts to minimize the number of opioid prescriptions issued to patients are improving, Wisconsin is now seeing a significant rise in the use of illicit drugs. This is due to the lack of access to prescription drugs like oxycodone and fentanyl. Individuals that are addicted to opioids are using heroin and synthetic fentanyl.

According to the 2016 report issued by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the status of opioid use and abuse in Wisconsin is prevalent across the state. Since 2009, the rate of drug-related mortality has increased from 9.3 deaths per 100,000 to 15.3 deaths per 100,000 in 2015. After years of being well below the national average, this increase brings Wisconsin to almost equal the national average of 15.5 deaths per 100,000. Additionally, the number of drug-related deaths has exceeded 500 in seven of the past eight years. 873 Wisconsin residents died in 2015 as a result of illicit drug use. Hepatitis C is also a concern. Between 2011 and 2015 the rate of infections of people between the ages of 15 and 29 more than doubled and was 87 deaths per 100,000 people in 2015. The rate of babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) is also on the rise in Wisconsin. In 2014, eight babies of every 1,000 hospital births was affected by NAS, while an additional 4.3 per 1,000 were affected by noxious influences. These numbers have both been increasing steadily in the last four years, from 4.7 per 1,000 babies with NAS and 2.2 per 1,000 births affected by noxious influences.

The impact of the opioid use is being seen in the hospitals as well. The number of opioid-related hospitalizations per 1,000 population has increased from 0.9 in 2005 to 1.6 in 2014, with increases in hospitalizations being seen in 40% of Wisconsin's counties. Allen, J. Wisconsin Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drugs, November 2016.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45718-16.pdf>

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Governor Walker's Task Force on Opioid Abuse released, *Combating Opioid Abuse Report 2017*. The report summarized the legislation that was passed during the 2017 legislative biennium, implementation updates, and recommendations that address: -- Prevention with a focus on youth education; --Supply Reduction that includes aims to secure funding for awarding grants to state and local agencies to expand capacity in the fight against illegal drugs, victim impact panel, and DOJ staff increase; --Treatment that includes funding a commission to develop a hub-and-spoke model, develop an internet-based training resource for county social services and veterans service staff, funding Graduate Nursing Education to reduce wait lists and increase class sizes and placement opportunities in the Mental Health, and that Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) allow for APNPs or PAs with the required training can prescribe buprenorphine without a collaborating physician.

<https://hope.wi.gov/Documents/Jan18%20Opioid%20Report%20JH%202.pdf>

In August 2016, the American Nurses Association developed *the ANA Issue Brief, The Opioid Epidemic: Addressing the Growing Drug Overdose Problem 2016*.

https://www.nursingworld.org/~4ae212/globalassets/docs/ana/ana_issue-brief-opioids_2016may20.pdf

The 2018 ANA Membership Assembly Wisconsin Representatives participated in a Dialogue Forum discussion on “Opioid Exposure Considerations in Caring for Patients with Overdose”. There are increased hazards to emergency responders and nurses who are treating individuals who are experiencing an overdose from synthetic fentanyl. The exposure to this type of opioid can be life-threatening. ANA will be working on the Identification of informational tools to inform students and nurses about responding to patients who have potential opioid overdose, and advocate for funding and other support for research and development of evidence-based protocols regarding opioid overdose.

ANA has developed resources to aid in managing and reducing the opioid epidemic that include outlining best practices, treatment and deterrence, pain management and federal legislation.

https://www.nursingworld.org/~4ae212/globalassets/docs/ana/ana_issue-brief-opioids_2016may20.pdf

Policy related proposals that support the nurses role in addressing the nations opioid crisis have been identified by ANA that address: expanded patient access to MAT: -- through the utilization of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses to prescribe be a MAT independent provider, -- Prescriber Education & Training: ANA believes the current crisis calls for additional support and focus on prescriber education to ensure that health care professionals who prescribe opioids are properly trained and educated in opioid prescribing, --. Deterrent Formulations: ANA urges greater investments in the scientific and clinical research needed to advance the development, assessment, and deployment of abuse-deterrent technologies. Issues surrounding abuse and misuse of prescription opioids must be balanced with the real and legitimate needs of those seeking treatment for pain; -- Increase Access to Opioid Antagonist – Naloxone: ANA supports increasing access to Naloxone for first responders, family, friends, and caregivers of those who are known to be chronic users of opioids. Naloxone is a critical tool in preventing overdose by opioids such as heroin, morphine, and oxycodone.

https://www.nursingworld.org/~4ae212/globalassets/docs/ana/ana_nursings-role-in-opioid-crisis_2016.pdf

Rationale for why this topic should be discussed by the WNA members during the WNA Membership Assembly Dialogue Forum

Opioid abuse has become a public health crisis and the public can benefit from the engagement of registered nurses as a resource to combating this issue.

Is there a role for WNA in addressing this crisis from the following perspectives?

Advocacy/policy

Education

Practice

Workforce

Leadership

Recommendations for action to be taken by WNA (be specific)

1. Identify WNA's role in addressing the opioid epidemic in Wisconsin.