

NALOXONE FOR ALL: ONE AGENCY'S JOURNEY TO INTRODUCE AN OVERDOSE RESPONSE AND NALOXONE TRAINING PROGRAM

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Introduction / Issues:

Opioid-related overdose deaths in Melbourne first exceeded road accident fatalities in 2011. The continued rise in overdose fatalities has led the State Coroner to call for increased distribution of naloxone and the establishment of a Medically Supervised Injecting Centre. While naloxone has been available without a prescription since early 2016, many obstacles to its distribution remain. The recent toxicological confirmation of fentanyl-laced heroin in Melbourne and its contribution to overdose deaths indicates that this problem will increase in both intensity and complexity.

Method / Approach:

This presentation will examine how a multi-faceted treatment and education service in Melbourne (UnitingCare ReGen) has worked within the constraints created by the current landscape to implement an overdose response and naloxone provision program, both working in partnership with other organisations at a state-wide level, as well as implementing its own organisational overdose response.

Key Findings:

Early findings suggest ReGen's work has resulted in uptake of overdose response and naloxone training from a broad range of community members.

Discussions and Conclusions:

Findings indicate a clear need for the wider provision of overdose response and naloxone provision services. ReGen's experience also suggests that agencies need to be given the support to invest both time and resources into such projects to allow them to reach their potential and to embed best practice throughout the organisation.