preventing opioid related overdoses
life-saving information for criminal justice professionals serving opioid-involved offenders

Adrienne C. Lindsey, MA, DBH
Rick Christensen, PA, CAS
Vicki Staples, MEd, CPRP
“With opioids there is a small window between euphoria and death.”

--The National Alliance of Advocates for Buprenorphine Treatment
part I: opioid use and overdose prevalence rates
opioids affect the brain { chemically, structurally, behaviorally }
the reward pathway

drugs & alcohol act on the reward pathway, the same region activated by:

- eating
- sex
- drinking
- other pleasurable activities
reinforcing effects

activates the rewards pathway
use results in excess dopamine
feelings of relaxation/wellbeing
13x higher mortality rate for opiate users than non opiate users
Drug overdose was the leading cause of death for those released from Washington State prisons between 1999 and 2003 (Binswanger et al., 2007).

Before...

- Homicides,
- Suicides,
- Heart disease, and...
- Motor vehicle accidents
death rates in treated & untreated heroin addicts

annual rate of deaths

- matched cohort: 0.15
- methadone: 0.85
- voluntary discharge: 1.65
- involuntary discharge: 6.91
- untreated: 7.2
half of young adults using heroin report using prescription opioids prior to commencing heroin
approximately 4.5 million Americans engage in the non-medical use of prescription opioids each month.
1.9 million Americans meet the criteria for an opioid substance use disorder.
prescription drugs are involved in a large number of emergency room visits
27.1% of emergency room visits in 2009 involved the misuse of pharmaceuticals.
prescription drug related emergency room visits increased by 98% between 2004 and 2009
17,000 prescription opioid-related deaths in 2010, double the rate of deaths in 2001
9,974 opiate-related emergency room visits in Arizona in 2012
prescription drugs are being increasingly abused by young people
1 in 12 high school seniors report having used Vicodin for nonmedical purposes
prescription drugs are the most commonly* abused drug by high school seniors
part II: MAT 101
“...treatment for a substance use disorder that includes a pharmacological intervention as part of a comprehensive substance abuse treatment plan...”
how MAT works

{ eases withdrawal
  reduces cravings
  induces illness
  reverses overdose }
part III: applications for offenders
rise in offender opioid use in Arizona for those on community supervision
overdose is one of the leading causes of death following jail/prison release
part IV: identifying those at risk for relapse or overdose
What are the risk factors?
precipitating events & triggers

- unemployment/job loss
- relationships
- release from incarceration or re-incarceration
- anniversaries
- celebrations
- change in housing/living situations
- symptoms increasing or decreasing
part V: signs & symptoms of opioid overdose
common prescription opioids

- codeine (generic only)
- hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- meperidine (Demerol)
- morphine (Avinza, Kadian, MS Contin, Ora-Morph SR)
- oxycodone (OxyContin)
- oxycodone & acetaminophen (Percocet)
- methadone (Methadose)
physical effects

drowsiness/"nodding off"

dizziness

constipation

euphoria

cough suppression

nausea

respiratory depression

pain reduction

vomiting

dizziness

Disorientation
polysubstance abuse and overdose

risk of overdose from illicit or prescription opioids is higher when combined with other substances, such as:

- alcohol
- benzodiazepines (e.g. Valium, Xanax)
- antihistamines
- sedatives
part VI: responding to an opioid overdose
how do opioids work?

- Full agonist (e.g., methadone)
- Partial agonist (e.g., buprenorphine)
- Antagonist (e.g., naloxone)
naloxone (Narcan®)

**mechanism:** full antagonist (blocks opioid receptors)

**pros** used to reverse opioid overdose, can prevent fatal overdose, family members or first responders can administer, no risk of abuse, $6/dose, nasal & auto-injectors available

**cons(?)** opponents argue naloxone will encourage opioid abuse
C-A-R

{ call 9-1-1
   open the person’s airway
   perform rescue breathing

}
part VII: maintenance medications to reduce the risk of overdose
MAT vs. illicit drugs

prescribed/monitored by a medical provider

obtained by illegal means

FDA-approved

not legally permitted

regulated potency

potency varies

curbs cravings and withdrawal symptoms

results in euphoria or a “high”
medications for opioids

{ methadone
  buprenorphine
  naltrexone }
methadone (Methadose®, Dolophine®)

**mechanism:** full agonist (acts on opioid receptors), alleviates withdrawal symptoms & cravings

**pros** affordable (usually gov’t subsidized), convenient dosing (1x/day), demonstrated safety for pregnant women

**cons** risk of overdose with too high a dose or taking in combination with alcohol
buprenorphine (Subutex®)
buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone®)

mechanism: partial agonist - blocks euphoric effects of opioids, alleviates withdrawal, assists with cravings

pros easier to taper than methadone, less risk of OD than methadone, available in a sublingual film, naloxone discourages abuse

cons costly $$$
naltrexone (Depade®, ReVia®, Vivitrol®)

**Mechanism:** full antagonist (blocks opioid receptors)

**Pros** prevents euphoric effects of opioids; non-addictive; extended release available

**Cons** non-compliance
part VIII: local initiatives
part IX: continuing education & additional resources
SAMHSA Opioid Overdose TOOLKIT

- Facts for Community Members
- Five Essential Steps for First Responders
- Information for Prescribers
- Safety Advice for Patients & Family Members
- Recovering from Opioid Overdose: Resources for overdose Survivors and Family Members

currently being updated and soon to be re-released
additional resources

- *Medication-Assisted Treatment for Criminal Justice Professionals*
  - online training - **coming soon!**

- National Treatment Referral Helpline 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or 1-800-487-4889 (TDD — for hearing impaired)

- National Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator: 
  [http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov/Treatment](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov/Treatment) to search by state, city, county, and zip code

- Buprenorphine Physician & Treatment Program Locator: 
  [http://www.buprenorphine.samhsa.gov/bwns_locator](http://www.buprenorphine.samhsa.gov/bwns_locator)

- Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) registry: 

- Information on naloxone (Narcan) kits: 