Opioid safety education associated with decreased opioid prescribing by emergency physicians

Mamata V Kene MD MPH, Mary E Reed DrPH, Abigail Eaton, Sunil Bhopale MD and Sameer Awsare MD

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| Challenge | **To understand outcomes of initiatives to align opioid prescribing in the ED with best practices have been implemented in KPNC.** |
| Existing Evidence | Opioid prescribing in ED has been on the decline for the last decade. A KPNC specific ED opioid safety initiative encouraged emergency physicians to consider CDC-aligned best practice in prescribing opioids for painful conditions. Other settings have demonstrated effectiveness of similar initiatives. |
| Target Population | ED patients in KPNC 2014-2018 |
| Intervention or Exposure | The Opioid Safety Initiative was an education and feedback module rolled out in 2016. Pre- and post-evaluation of opioid prescribing by ED physicians |
| **Outcomes/Key Findings** | **The Opioid Safety Initiative was associated with an immediate and sustained decline in opioid prescribing, overall and for key subgroups with acute extremity fracture and low back pain.**  From the start to end of the observation period, opioid prescribing declined 31% in the ED, with prescriptions for more than 20 tablets/3 days supply declining 65%. Whereas other systems report wide variation between highest and lowest quartiles of emergency physicians in opioid prescribing, our analysis demonstrated little variation (19% vs 21% lowest to highest quartile at the start of the observation period). |
| **Resulting Action/Change** | **The Opioid Safety Initiative was associated with a decline in opioid prescribing in KPNC EDs. Continuing education to maintain this observed shift in practice may be helpful.** |
| Additional Recommendations | It is unknown whether the decrease in opioid prescribing observed among emergency physicians is associated with changes in downstream utilization or long-term opioid use, as well as changes in prescribing of alternate analgesic medications. We recommend further research to better understand health system impact of the changes in ED opioid prescribing. |
| Implementation Tools | N/A |
| Implementation Measurement | N/A |
| Reference | Figure, table, graphical abstract: mansucript and figures in development.  doi: |