Opioid Treatment Accreditation Course (OTAC) Participants in NSW

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BACKGROUND

Barriers to prescribing opioid pharmacotherapies include:

- Requirement for specific training¹
- Uncertain evidence of safety and efficacy¹
- Stigmatised patient group and treatment¹
- Negative patient experiences¹,²
- Poor access to specialist support¹,²
- Structural and operational barriers²

Introductory training and accreditation courses exist for health professionals to meet regulatory requirements and could help address commonly reported barriers to prescribing.

ACCREDITATION PATHWAY IN NSW

Three stage process for New South Wales medical and nurse practitioners obtain accreditation to prescribe pharmacotherapies for opioid dependence.

1. Completion of training courses:
   - Fundamentals Training
   - Opioid Treatment Accreditation Course (OTAC)
2. Clinical placement with an experienced specialist in addiction medicine or addiction psychiatry.
3. Application to the NSW Ministry of Health Pharmacotherapy Credentialing Subcommittee.

RESULTS

Locality

- Majority of participants from metropolitan LHD catchment areas (70%), compared to regional and rural (30%).
- Metropolitan enrolments greater in inner-Sydney catchment areas.
- Regional and rural enrolments primarily from Hunter New England.
- Central Coast (adjacent to Hunter New England) has few enrolments.
- Far West (rural) lacking any enrolments.

Field of speciality

Potential prescribers (n=89)

- General practice formed largest group of potential prescriber enrolments (49%).
- Other prescribers: anaesthesia, infectious disease, rehabilitation, public health.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

- A difference in enrolments between metropolitan and regional or rural settings was found.
- Wide variation between each LHD catchments even after adjusting for population size.
- General practitioners have expressed greatest interest, with other specialities expressing limited interest in training courses.
- Non-prescriber enrolments suggest an interest to increase understanding of NSW Opioid Treatment Program and pharmacotherapies.
- Targeting areas of low enrolment and linking participants to drug and alcohol services could increase treatment capacity and improve shared care systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES


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