

A National Take-Home Naloxone Program for Australia

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Introduction / Issues: Rates of overdose are increasing in Australia, accounting for more deaths per year than the national road toll. Internationally, naloxone distribution programs have been successfully implemented to address growing overdose mortality. These provide free or affordable take-home naloxone (THN) to people likely to experience or witness an overdose. While there have been changes in making naloxone available in Australia, challenges remain with accessing and creating a demand and how best to achieve sufficient coverage.

Method / Approach: A desk-based review of international naloxone distribution programs, key stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions with service providers and people who use drugs.

Key Findings: A national model for a large-scale program to distribute THN has been proposed. This program draws on existing trials and diverse approaches across jurisdictions and addresses; access conditions, eligibility criteria for agencies, training, public awareness campaign, data collection.

Discussions and Conclusions: For such a model to work it is necessary to allow executive protocol authority to non-medical staff to dispense naloxone and for the program to be funded outside of the current PBS system.

Implications for Practice or Policy (optional): This model can inform the development of a national naloxone distribution program or a network of state- and territory-based programs. A publically funded naloxone program as evident in other countries, can be implemented in Australia that offers naloxone free and by purchase from a range of settings to a range of clients

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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