Can we save more lives? A new approach to providing take-home naloxone.

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Introduction: To date, the provision of take-home naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses, has predominantly been through face to face contact with treatment providers and other services. However, this may be a barrier for those who live in remote areas and are unable to access services, or those who do not wish to be identified by accessing services in person.

Abstract body text: The NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA) funded by the NSW Ministry of Health commenced a pilot program in December 2020, of a postal take-home naloxone service. The online registration, training/intervention and assessment process, with the naloxone sent through the post, may be a “game changer” in terms of addressing the ongoing risk of opioid related overdoses and deaths.

Data for the last twelve months indicates a high demand for this type of service, with 88% (789) of a total of 895 units of naloxone provided by NUAA to members of the community, being through the postal service. The majority of people accessing the service were males (71%), 36 - 45 years (90%), who also accessed injecting equipment, information, advice, when accessing the postal take-home naloxone service.

The experience of people who accessed the pilot program will be discussed, including the implications for other service providers who may consider providing a similar service.

Discussions and Conclusions: A postal take-home naloxone service with online registration, training and assessment, and provision of the naloxone through the post, addresses a number of gaps in providing this life-saving intervention to as many people in the community as possible.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: No pharmaceutical grants were received in the development of this study. NUAA received funding from the NSW Ministry of Health for the pilot program and the evaluation.