**Title:** Operation Naloxone: Overdose Prevention on Campus

**Authors:** Lori Holleran Steiker, PhD, ACSW; Lucas G. Hill, PharmD, BCPS, BCACP; J. Nile Barnes, EMT-P(LP), PharmD, BCPS

**Corresponding Author:** Lori Holleran Steiker (lorikay@mail.utexas.edu)

**Keywords:** overdose prevention, harm reduction, opioid, naloxone, interprofessional collaboration

**Background**

Opioid misuse and overdose is impacting colleges and universities profoundly. This presentation is a response to the pervasive lack of knowledge, and resistance to incorporating opioid awareness and overdose prevention mechanisms on college campuses. The prescription drug misuse epidemic is widespread on college campuses. Since the early 1990s, the proportion of college students using prescription drugs went up dramatically: use of opioids increased by 343%. In addition, 50% of college students are offered a prescription drug for nonmedical purposes by their sophomore year. Since 1991, fatal overdoses from prescription painkillers have more than tripled. Despite media documentation of the epidemic, students continue to hold the misconception that prescription drugs are "safer" than illegal narcotics. The staggering increase in related deaths in the emerging adult age group illuminates this faulty logic.
College campuses have an obligation to provide education and resources to make young adults and campus employees aware of the dangers of misusing opioids and how to intervene when an overdose occurs. Teams must find ways to collaborate and achieve effective communication and networking between community experts, academic specialists, researchers, students, faculty, staff and university administrators. Overdose prevention trainings exist and can be tailored for university groups. The greatest challenge is weaving policy, practice, and research for further impact on college campuses.

**Program Description**

This presentation will share the systematic innovations of the Operation Naloxone (ON) initiative at the University of Texas at Austin. Strategic interdisciplinary partnerships between academic units, medical facilitates, and community organizations have been key to the success of the project. A protocol for achieving this level of collaboration will be highlighted. Notably, these resources and protocols are already being adopted at other universities in the United States.

The ON multidisciplinary team's grass roots discussions with campus administrators laid the groundwork for this ambitious project. Initially, the administrators were not open to naloxone training for resident assistants. The Associate Vice President for Student Affairs called a team together via the UT Wellness Network now named the Committee on Substance Safety and Overdose Prevention (C OSSOP). It includes the following disciplines and entities: School of Social Work, Texas Overdose Naloxone Initiative, College of Pharmacy, Greek Life,
Center for Students in Recovery, Students for Sensible Drug Policy, Residence Life, UT Police Department, and others. After the development of COSSOP, proponents for overdose prevention were able to speak with one voice to achieve progress related to opioid overdose prevention.

Resident advisors in on-campus dorms received a mandatory overdose prevention and naloxone administration training in Fall 2016. Naloxone rescue kits were simultaneously placed strategically within dormitories by Residence Life. The UT Counseling and Mental Health Center also received training, as did more than one hundred UT Police Department officers. Each officer was also provided with a naloxone rescue kit. Student pharmacists were trained to provide community outreach presentations in off-campus college housing cooperatives, and they have trained more than eighty college students to respond to opioid overdoses with naloxone while also providing them with free naloxone rescue kits. The UT Student Government unanimously passed a resolution to stock naloxone at the 40 Acres Pharmacy on campus, and the College of Pharmacy worked with University Health Services to make this a reality.

**Future Expansion**

Faculty and student leaders within Operation Naloxone are eager to form new partnerships that advance the mission of opioid overdose prevention on and off campus. The details of this program will be shared at the upcoming American College Health Association Annual Meeting in hopes that other universities will learn from our process. A collaboration with the Texas Health and Human Services
Commission is being undertaken to create continuing education modules for health professionals that promote naloxone prescribing and other strategies to prevent opioid overdose deaths. Community partners are preparing to provide drug testing kits and other novel harm reduction interventions on local streets, as well as to advance statewide legislation to legalize programs which provide access to clean syringes. Interprofessional service learning programs that bring together students from pharmacy, social work, and other professions are being piloted for broad implementation in 2017.