

Long-Term Opiate Cessation: The Nurse's Role as Patient Advocate

Sheryl L. Lambert AA, LPN, BSN Student
Faculty Advisor: Ericka Sanner-Stiehr, PhD, RN

PURPOSE

The purpose of this literature review is to describe the role of Registered Nurses (RNs) in promoting long-term cessation in opioid-dependent patients.

The nurse-patient relationship provides opportunities to intervene for improved patient outcomes.

BACKGROUND

- Accidental overdose is the leading cause of death among adults ages 25-64
- 28,647 deaths (61%) of all drug overdoses were related to opioid overdoses.
- 1.9 million Americans reported substance abuse disorder involving prescription pain relievers in 2014.
- 586,000 reported substance abuse disorder involving heroin.
- 80% of new heroin users started out misusing prescription painkillers.
- Opioid pain reliever prescribing has quadrupled since 1999.
- 259 million prescriptions were written for opioids in 2012, more than enough to give a bottle to every American adult.



METHODS

- Databases searched: PubMed, CINAHL, Medscape; Internet search
- Keywords: addiction; opioid; nurs*; barriers; self-efficacy
- Inclusion criteria: focus on treatment adherence, patient outcomes, and opioid-specific addictions
- A total of 15 articles were identified.

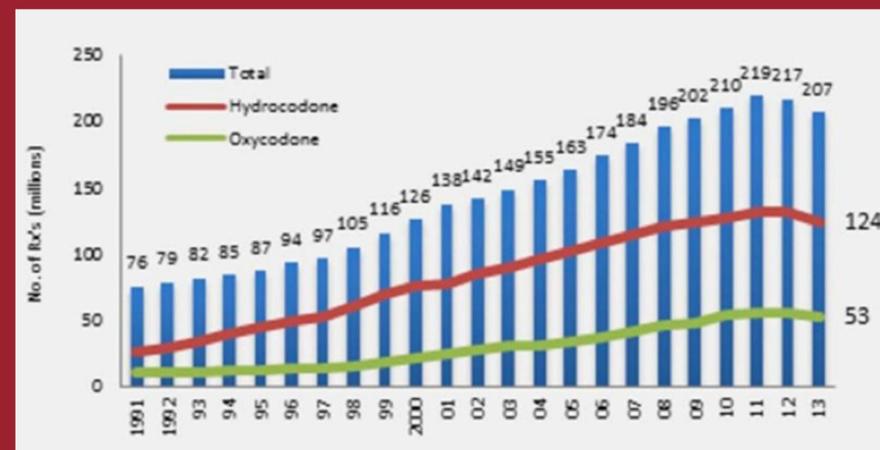
RESULTS

Predictors of Treatment Adherence

- Early identification of behaviors and patient perceptions can assist the RN in identification for the patient's desire for long-term cessation adherence.
- Motivational interviewing can increase abstinence self-efficacy.
- Abstinence self-efficacy has shown as one of the strongest predictors to at least 1 year abstinence.
- Individualized interventions increase treatment adherence.

Education for Nurses

- Perceptions of opioid-dependent patients can be negative, leading to dissonant care.
- Continuing education for RNs should include assessments and interventions specific to this population.
- Use of screening tools such as Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale or Leed's Dependence Questionnaire in Emergency Departments and primary care clinics.



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Addressing Barriers

- Fear of withdrawal can deter patients from seeking treatment.
- Withdrawal can be managed with medication at specialized clinics.
- Outreach and referrals to social services increase treatment adherence and long-term cessation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE

RNs are in a unique position to positively impact patient outcomes. Based on this literature review, the following recommendations for training are suggested:

- **RN Education:**
 - Self-reflection to identify biases
 - Training in interview techniques
 - Current treatments & programs
- **Patient Education:**
 - Adherence to treatment
 - Referrals to resources
 - Prescription opioid home management.
- Collaboration with prescribing physicians.
- Interprofessional, individualized plans of care.

Current Policy Reforms

- **2016 **CONGRESS APPROVES NEW OPIOID ADDICTION BILL** for increased services**

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