

Near Death: Shame and Stigma Among Survivors of Overdose

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Definitions

- Abstinence
- Harm reduction
- Overdose
- People who use drugs (PWUD)
- Shame
- Stigma
- Substance use disorder (SUD)

“I Died Four Times Last Week”

- The Opioid Epidemic declared a public health crisis
- 91,799 overdose deaths in 2020
- Overdose disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Abstinence-based treatment vs. harm reduction

Literature Review: Stigma

- 20.3 million people with SUD
- Stigma among people who use drugs
- Stigma impacts how a person will use
- Stigma impacts overdose

Literature Review: Stigma

Stigma toward PWUD by:

- First responders/law enforcement
 - “naloxone continues the cycle of addiction”
 - “naloxone is an excuse to continue using”
 - “there should be a limit”
- Healthcare workers
 - “addiction is a moral failing”
 - “they lack gratitude for the life saving efforts provided”
 - “naloxone gives permission to overdose”

Literature Review: Harm Reduction

- Stigma toward harm reduction
- Overdose awareness and prevention trainings
 - Improved attitudes and perceptions
 - 1st hand accounts, demonstration of naloxone delivery, social-historical background
- Humanizing PWUD

Implications

- PWUD experience stigma and shame
- Stigma and shame contribute to overdose
- Advocacy and treatment interventions aimed at
 - Shame and stigma reduction
 - Harm reduction education
 - Humanizing PWUD

Proposed Study

- Recruit PWUD and are at risk of overdose
- Pre and post test screening measures
- Random assignment
 - Control group (no therapy intervention)
 - Treatment group (therapy intervention)

Questions

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