

# Home Health Medication and Opioid Safety Program Pilot Results

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## Background

- Prevention of opioid use disorder (OUD) is a critical step in reversing the opioid epidemic.<sup>1</sup> Home health nurses are accessible and trusted providers who directly care for home-bound, allowing contribution to OUD prevention in this population.
- In 2018, the ONE Program incorporated the Opioid Risk Tool (ORT) in a community pharmacy intervention to help identify patients at elevated risk for opioid misuse and deliver individualized medication safety-related services to them.<sup>2</sup> This established a link between local public health units providing naloxone to the pharmacies that gave them to patients.<sup>3</sup>
- The ONE program was expanded from pharmacies into collaborations with Local Public Health Units and Catholic Health Initiatives Health at Home ("home health") nurses to create a medication and opioid safety program.

## Methods

- Home health nurses received free training to assess medication safety risks related to medication storage, disposal, and use of pain medications.<sup>4</sup>
- Patients on an opioid prescription were screened for risk of opioid misuse using the ORT and screened for risk of accidental overdose based on comorbidities, social history, and concomitant medications.<sup>2</sup>
- A triage tool (Figure 1) guided nurses to provide interventions based on patient risk stratification.
- 7 LPHU and 1 Medicare-certified entities participated.

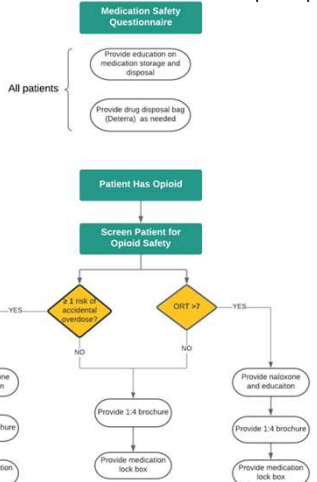


Figure 1. Triage Tool For Home Health Nurses

Home Health nurses have a unique opportunity to bridge pharmacy and public health and implemented a medication safety program in home-bound patients across North Dakota.

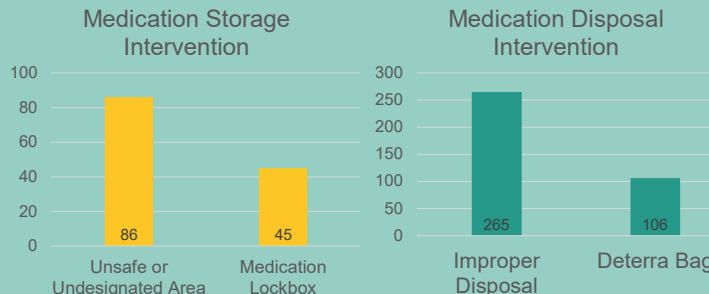
## Home Health Nurse Storage and Disposal Interventions (n=783 patients)<sup>4</sup>

86 (11.4%) patients were storing their medications in an unsafe or undesignated space.

265 (37.9%) patients were disposing medications in the trash or not at all.

45 (5.8%) patients received a medication lockbox.

106 (13.5%) patients received a Detera bag for proper disposal.



## Results

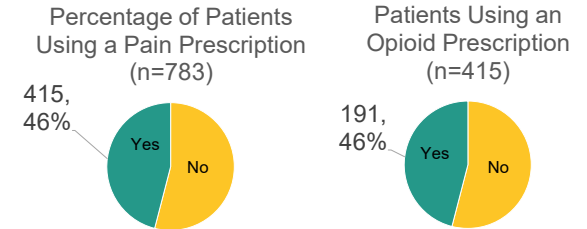


Figure 2. Percentage of Patients with a Pain Prescription and Those With an Opioid Prescription<sup>4</sup>

Patients At Risk and Who Received Naloxone (n=191)

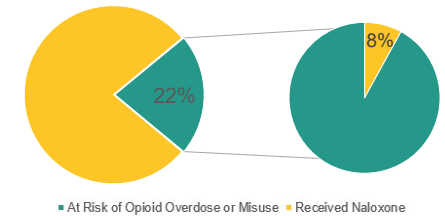


Figure 3. Percentage of Patients At Risk of Opioid Overdose and/or Misuse and Patients who Received Naloxone<sup>4</sup>

Nurses utilized the ORT and subsequent risk stratification to provide individualized interventions to 783 individuals. Of those 415 (46%) use a pain prescription. 191 (46%) of those are an opioid pain prescription. 42 of the 191 patients (22%) were at high risk for opioid misuse or overdose. 17 (8%) of patients on an opioid were given naloxone and education.

## Conclusions

- Home health nurses implemented the ORT to allow for tailored care of patient pain medication management.
- This collaboration demonstrates an innovative partnership between pharmacy and public health to benefit our communities and patients.
- Home health nurses have a unique opportunity to increase patient medication safety through storage, disposal, and use of pain medication interventions.

## References

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