

Solution to the opioid crisis

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The opioid epidemic is a major issue in America. Many seek to reverse it by implementing certain plans to help get rid of it. Its more than just a one step process. A collection of things need to be done in order to at least help make the problem less intense. There have been a bunch of different strategies and approaches that people have tried to use. Not all of them are as effective as others. Some of the steps are educating people early and effectively by telling them about opioids, preventing someone from getting addicted by proposing a different treatment or medication that is less addicting, and being ready to save someone who has overdosed by giving them Naloxone, which is a drug that can reverse an overdose. On the flip side, there are those who think that people are being enabled to use opioids by giving them Naloxone and a simpler solution would just to be arrest those who are selling and using opioids when they shouldn't be. In the end, what works will work but only if people are willing to help get rid of this crisis.

Solution to the Opioid Crisis The over and unnecessary use of Opioids has become a huge problem in the United States.

These prescription drugs have been the cause for more than 42, 000 overdose deaths in just the year of 2015 (Corley, 2018). It has only gotten worse in the more recent years. There have been quite a few plans and ideas created for the purpose to help end this growing problem, but it's going to take more than just one action to stop this issue. In order to combat the opioid epidemic, the people of this country need to take the steps to stop the issue from becoming worse. What should be done? The most effective approach would be to have several ways to deal with people in different stages of their lives, weather they have an addiction or not. First, people

need to be educated. From young teenagers who don't know what an opioid is, to patients who are about to be put on one. Next, prevention should be the top priority. Better to make sure someone doesn't get addicted then try to cure them later. Lastly, to keep people who are too far gone from dying of an overdose, others should be trained to save that person's life if possible.

Education A lot of people go to the hospital without even knowing what an opioid is. Many patients don't even know what medications that they are going to be given, or they just don't care. Then there are others who take these drugs knowingly without needing them. A great way to make people aware is to properly educate them of the risks that come along with taking an opioid. This knowledge needs to be provided early. According to Jamie Wicker and John Crumpton, this is part of "...the key to eliminating overdoses..." (Wicker, Crumpton, 2017). In the same article, they also say to "Reach children early" (Wicker, Crumpton, 2017). Since many people get addicted early on in their lives, this is a good strategy to put in place.

Prevention

Another thing that can be done is prevent people from being addicted. This can be done several ways. Doctors can make use of other types of pain killers that are not as addicting as the stronger opioids. As Frank E. O'Donnell says, "...prescribers should be encouraged to offer buprenorphine as a first-line therapy before resorting to a CII opioid" (O'Donnell, 2017).

Buprenorphine is the only type of opioid that is less likely to get addicted to. If this was given to people instead of other prescription opioids, there would be less problems. Early intervention is also a necessary element in making

sure the problem doesn't get worse. Better to address someone's addiction before "...their abuse hits a peak" (Steiner, 2016).

Treatment

What if someone is way past education and no one has stepped in to help them? That would leave only one way to save that person's life if they overdosed. If given to someone in time, a medication called Naloxone can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. This would then give the person overdosing a chance to get some help with their addiction. Due to the use of Naloxone, it has been "...found that 26, 463 opioid overdose reversals occurred as a result..." from 1996 to 2004 (Sharma, 2017). Now, everyone is highly encouraged to use Naloxone when a situation dealing with an overdose arrives.

Opposing Sides

Naturally, not everyone will agree on a certain viewpoint. There's always going to be resistance, but what matters is the response to that opposition. First there are those who think that arresting people is easier than helping those addicted, and then there are those who are against Naloxone.

Enforcement

There are some who think that time shouldn't be wasted on helping someone who is addicted to opioids. So, there have been other plans cooked up to solve the spreading crisis in the United States. One of those is to arrest individuals who are caught smuggling, distributing, and possessing opioids. This would be a good idea because it would help eliminate the problem. Although, this method has been used before in history, and now its being

called "...the worst approach to his problem..." because it has "...proven to have failed countless times over the past 100 years" (Sederer, 2017). This plan hasn't done anything to help alleviate the issue at hand.

Enabling

This is in response to the push to use Naloxone on someone who has overdosed. Even though Naloxone happens to be " safe, effective, and has no abuse potential", there are still people who don't agree that it should be used (Clark, 2014). Specifically, they believe that the appearance and use of Naloxone gives those who are addicted " a license to use opioids" (Clark, 2014). This is true, then again, what about those who unintentionally overdose? Without Naloxone, there would be more lives claimed by this epidemic that continues to grow and grow.

Conclusion

The opioid epidemic is only going to get worse. That's why there's such a need for immediate action in order to save lives. People need to be properly educated of the risks when it comes to taking opioids. Those in the medical field need to advise and perhaps recommend other therapies and pain killers and early intervention is crucial to keep an individual's addiction from getting worse. Finally, people need to be trained and ready to administer Naloxone in the case of an overdose. It may not be possible to get rid of the addicting prescription opioids, but its possible to save lives by keeping people from getting addicted. Until some other method or treatment emerges that can rid the United States of this problem, the proper actions and steps need to be taken to make it less severe.