Interorganizational Relationships Within Public Health Systems to Address Prescription Drug Abuse: A Qualitative Analysis
Lainie Rutkow, JD, PhD, MPH; Katherine C. Smith, PhD; Beata Debinski, MHS; Jon S. Vernick, JD, MPH; Caleb Alexander, MD, MS
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Background

Benefits and drawbacks of prescription opioids:
- May improve quality of life for those with certain acute or chronic medical conditions
- High potential for abuse; life-threatening adverse effects
- At least 2 million Americans are addicted to prescription opioids

Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs):
- Collect, analyze, and report information about prescribing and utilization of controlled substances
- Depending on law, may be accessed by prescribers, pharmacists, law enforcement, etc.

Project Aims:
- Examine how interorganizational relationships among states’ public health system agencies affect structure and function of PDMPs
- Assess how the scope and clarity of legal powers specified in authorizing legislation, enforcement authority, and assigned duties of PDMPs affect their ability to function in the public health system
- Determine how PDMPs’ infrastructure affects their ability to address diversion of prescription drugs and associated morbidity and mortality

Methods

- Case selection: Purposive selection of four states to reflect range of PDMP characteristics
- Semi-structured interviews in each case state: sample includes PDMP stakeholders
  - Interview guide domains:
    - PDMPs and the problem of prescription drug abuse
    - Interorganizational relationships
    - Information sharing
    - Impact of legal structure
    - Infrastructure and resources
  - With permission, interviews recorded and transcribed
- Analysis plan:
  - Coding of transcript data
  - Standardized codebook
  - Qualitative software
  - Identification of themes within and across states

Case States and Interview Sample

- Florida: E-FORCSE, Department of Health
  - Health-oriented interviewees: 5
  - Law enforcement-oriented interviewees: 4
- Kentucky: KASPER, Cabinet for Health and Family Services
  - Health-oriented interviewees: 6
  - Law enforcement-oriented interviewees: 2
- Ohio: OARRS, Board of Pharmacy
  - Health-oriented interviewees: 6
  - Law enforcement-oriented interviewees: 3
- New Jersey: NJPMP, Division of Consumer Affairs
  - Health-oriented interviewees: 5
  - Law enforcement-oriented interviewees: 6

Common Themes

- Interorganizational relationships
  - Conflict between legislatively mandated collaborations vs. informal partnerships (e.g., interdisciplinary advisory council for PDMP)
- Scope and clarity of legal powers
  - Obstacles to use of data (e.g., requirements for prescriber registration and use of PDMP data)
  - Can delegates access PDMP data?
- Infrastructure and function
  - Conflict between PDMP use for health care providers vs. law enforcement
  - How to optimize data-sharing arrangements (e.g., EMRs)

Implications for Policy and Practice

Findings may assist:
- State-level policymakers to revisit PDMP’s legally established infrastructure
- State-level executive branch leadership to refine information sharing arrangements or interorganizational linkages
- PDMP administrators and staff as they implement their programs and advocate for more resources or authority

Translation
- Publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Conference presentations
- Presentations in conjunction with National Association of Attorneys General

Dissemination
- Project websites with two institutions
- Blog posts via Network for Public Health Law and Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy
- Social media

Project Information

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