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Adolescent Education and Awareness about Prescription Opioids

Behavioral and Social Sciences

Rationale

Starting in the 1990's the opioid epidemic has struck society with a bang. Between 1990 and 2017, over 400,000 people have died from an opioid overdose (Overview of the Drug Overdose Epidemic: Behind the Numbers, 2018). The use of opioids among generations in society have increased six times as much since 1990. Because this epidemic is on a steady rate of progression, many studies have been released to find the cause of this epidemic.

According to Abraham, O., Thakur, T., & Brown, R. (2019), one in four adolescents in the US have misused a prescription opioid at least once in their lifetime. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as individuals between the age range of 10-19 years of age (Adolescent Health, 2018). In 2016, there were 12 million opioid misusers aged 12 or older in the U.S. Due to the large percentage of adolescents misusing opioids, research have been focused to this generation. Many concerns about how students gain access to opioid and the ability of families to monitor opioid uses play a heavy role when looking at the generation of adolescents. However, before the concern about students using opioids, we must focus on students awareness and education on opioids. In order for adolescents to be using opioids, they must have a general awareness or be educated on opioids, either through a school health class or general knowledge. From conducting a literature review, it has been determined that student education may be lacking, leading to the adolescent generation misusing opioids.

Hypothesis

Students are not being educated enough (do not have the proper knowledge) on the use of opioids.

Research Questions

- Are adolescents being educated enough on the use of opioids?
- Is the lack of education a contribution to the misuse of opioids in adolescents?

Research Methods

A quiz will be distributed to high school students and middle school students in grades 10-12.

The quiz will ask questions about opioids that adolescents are suggested to know. This quiz will allow one to tell the difference between student awareness and student education on opioids.

Those who have an awareness of opioids can answer the basic questions on opioids correctly, while students who are educated can answer specific questions about opioids. The questions will be taken from

An evaluation will be conducted with the current health teachers at the high school. The current curriculum will be evaluated.

Procedure

1. A survey will be conducted with the senior high health teachers to accumulate an awareness of what is being taught in health classes.
2. Assent forms will be distributed to high school students in grades 10-12. The form will be distributed before students take the quiz afterschool.
3. A quiz will be developed with questions pertaining to facts about opioids. The quiz will be taken on Microsoft Forms.
4. Questions will be marked as either measuring for awareness or education.
5. After obtaining the results from the quiz, an evaluation will be done on each student to see how many questions they got right out of the awareness and education questions.

Materials

- Microsoft Forms Quiz
- Microsoft Excel
- Health Curriculum of Health Classes.
- Participant Assent Forms

Participants

The participants will be in the age range of 15-18. Each participant will receive an assent form to ensure they are in full consent of the quiz they will take. The quiz will be distributed afterschool.

Protection of Privacy

The answers to the questions from the quiz will be collected on Microsoft Forms, where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Microsoft Forms does not collect personal information such as your name, email address, or IP address through the anonymous function. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. The researcher will not be able to identify you or your answers, and such individuals will not know whether or not you participated in the study.

However, there is always the possibility of tampering from an outside source when using the internet for collecting information. While the confidentiality of your responses will be protected once the data are downloaded from the internet, there is always a possibility of hacking or other security breaches that could threaten the confidentiality of your responses. Once again, please know that you are free to decide not to answer any question.

After data is collected and analyzed in Microsoft Excel, the data will be deleted from the password protected database.

Informed Consent Process

Each participant will receive an assent form into which their parents and the participant has to sign in order to take the quiz. The assent form will include what the participants will be doing and any potential risks the quiz will have on the participants. If a student does not provide a signed assent form, they will not be able to participate in the quiz.

Risk and Safety

Some students may be sensitive to the topic of prescription drugs if it is related personally. In addition, some of the junior high students may not know what opioids are causing them to ask questions that them or their parents have not intended for them to know. The quiz will be reviewed by a psychologist to ensure the questions will not leave any long lasting effects on the participants. If the student has been impacted by opioids in their lifetime, this may be a sensitive topic, and could potentially result in emotional stress. This risk was listed in the parent consent form. The topic of prescription opioid addiction may be a sensitive topic to those who have family members who struggle with drug addiction.