

Rio Rico Survey: Opioid Misuse

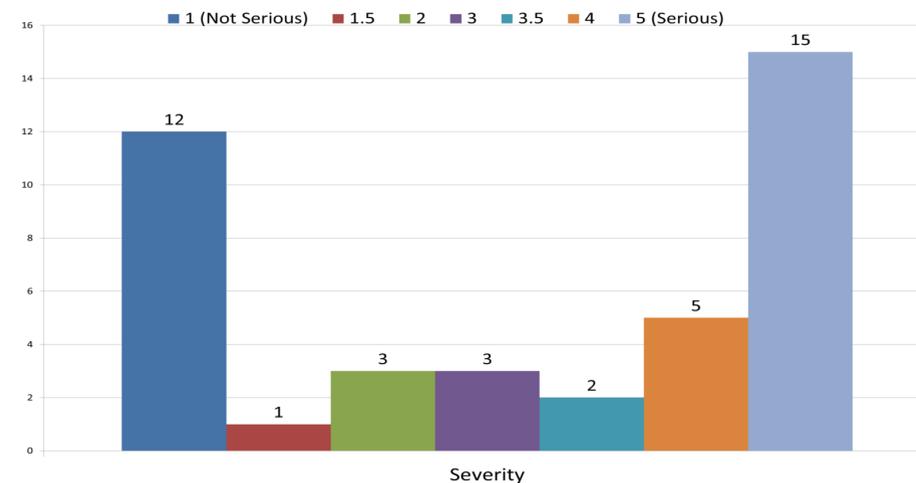
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Introduction

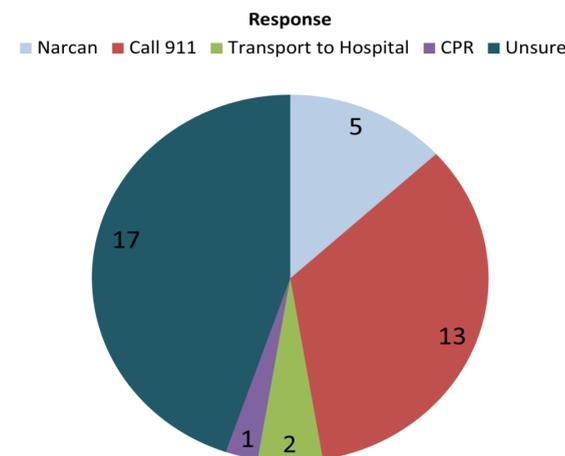
Opioid-related overdose, death, and opioid misuse continue to rise and are a current public health crisis across the US.¹ In 2017, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey declared a state of emergency to combat the opioid epidemic. Since June 15, 2017 ADHS reports 4,815 opioid-related deaths and 37,999 overdoses.² Although the state of emergency in Arizona ended in 2018, more information is needed to better understand the state of the opioid crisis today. Our Cohort of AHEC Scholars conducted a door-to-door survey in Rio Rico, AZ on perceptions of opioid misuse to gauge concern and knowledge in that community.

Results

-43 total surveys were collected with responses in both English and Spanish.
 -16 respondents stated they did not know what an opioid is and 25 stated they did not know how to recognize an opioid overdose.
 -Figure 1 below shows perceived severity of opioid misuse in Rio Rico varied widely.



-Figure 2 below outlines how respondents would help someone experiencing an overdose.



Results (continued)

-An overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they believed youth and young adults were most at risk for misusing opioids, followed by middle-aged adults and elderly individuals.
 -When asked how people who misuse opioids in Rio Rico are viewed, the most common response was negative (i.e. “junkie”, “drug addict”).
 -Suggestions to improve the issue of opioid misuse included changing prescribing practices (n=9), education (n=6), and family or community outreach (n=4).

Conclusions

Perceptions and knowledge of what an opioid is and misuse vary widely in Rio Rico. The severity of opioid misuse was perceived by many to be high, but also a large number did not think opioid misuse was a large issue. Our results suggest that improvements in knowledge of opioids in general, including misuse could help improve the current situation in Rio Rico. More information about opioid misuse in Rio Rico should be collected to determine future interventions.

References

1. Malta M, Varatharajan T, Russell C, Pang M, Bonato S, Fischer B. Opioid-related treatment, interventions, and outcomes among incarcerated persons: A systematic review. PLoS Med. 2019;16(12):e1003002. Published 2019 Dec 31. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1003002
2. Opioid Epidemic. azdhs.gov <https://www.azdhs.gov/prevention/womens-childrens-health/injury-prevention/opioid-prevention/index.php>. Published March 19, 2020. Accessed March 25, 2020

Methods

SEAHEC coordinators adapted a survey previously conducted in Nogales, AZ to be used in Rio Rico, AZ. SEAHEC coordinators met with staff of a community organization involved with opioid misuse problems to determine a convenience sample where the survey was most relevant. Pairs of AHEC Scholars went from door-to-door in the relevant neighborhood and orally conducted the survey in English and Spanish. Responses and relevant quotes were transcribed and analyzed after the survey was conducted before it was presented to the Santa Cruz Opioid Consortium.