Prescription Opioid and Heroin Crisis in Philadelphia

Board of Health

March 9, 2017
Outline

• Overdoses in Philadelphia
• Prescription opioids
• Transition to heroin
• Magnitude of the problem
• Approaches to a solution
Drug overdoses in Philadelphia

Number of Overdose and Injury-related Deaths – Philadelphia, 2003-2016*

Drug overdose deaths continue to rise in Philadelphia, with close to 900 deaths expected in 2016

Medical Examiner’s Office, Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Deaths continue to rise steadily

~80% of these deaths involve opioids
Drug overdoses in Philadelphia

Opioids include prescription medications, heroin and fentanyl

Medical Examiner’s Office, Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Prescription Opioid Sales, Treatment Admissions, and Overdose Deaths
U.S., 1999-2010

Prescription Opioids

In Philadelphia, sales increased 2x between 2001-2012

Sales of Opioids, Philadelphia, 2001-2016

Reports from DEA Automated Reports and Consolidated Ordering System (ARCOS) system for Philadelphia zip codes
Transition to Heroin

$25
30mg Roxicodone,
street price in Philadelphia

$14
30mg South American heroin

- Few people who misuse pharmaceutical opioids become heroin users (4% initiate heroin use within 5 years)
- People who have misused opioid pain relievers are 19 times more likely than others to start using heroin
Heroin is pure and cheap in Philadelphia

2014 Heroin Domestic Monitor Program
Evolution of the Opioid Crisis

Fentanyl

Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 50-100 times stronger than morphine, is increasingly found in users who have fatally overdosed.
Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths

Age-Adjusted Death Rate* per 100,000 Residents, 2015

- Female: 30.0
- Male: 60.0
- White, NH: 50.0
- Black, NH: 50.0
- Hispanic: 40.0
- Other*: 20.0
- 15-24: 50.0
- 25-34: 45.0
- 35-44: 70.0
- 45-54: 60.0
- 55+: 10.0

* Rates are calculated using Philadelphia county population denominators from the 2015 American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Rates are adjusted to the 2000 U.S. Standard Population age distribution.

** Deaths among persons who had race/ethnicity listed as other were too few to calculate a rate

*** Age-specific death rates are shown

Source: Medical Examiner’s Office, Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

While many overdose deaths occur in the Kensington area, they happen across all of the city.

Medical Examiner’s Office, Philadelphia Department of Public Health
### Estimated magnitude of the problem in Philadelphia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal overdoses</td>
<td>~900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In treatment for opioid dependence (publicly funded)</td>
<td>~14,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heroin use (last year)</td>
<td>~55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse/abuse of prescription opioids (last year)</td>
<td>~55,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults receiving &gt;1 opioid prescription/year</td>
<td>~150,000</td>
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Fatal overdoses are only the tip of the iceberg
PDPH involvement in Addressing the Opioid Crisis

• Reducing over-prescribing of opioids to reduce number of people who become dependent

• **Increasing treatment** for those already dependent

• **Increasing availability and use of naloxone** to prevent fatal overdose
Reducing over-prescribing of opioids

- Opioid and benzodiazepine prescribing guidelines
- Analyze prescribing data for targeted education to high prescribers
Increasing Access to Treatment

• Supporting primary care clinics across the city in offering buprenorphine

• Start buprenorphine prescribing in Health Centers
Naloxone

Administered to by EMS (2016) ~4,000
Administered by Police (2016) ~200
Distributed by Prevention Point (2016) ~5,500

~9,700

Despite this use of naloxone, approximately 2-5 people die from opioid overdoses every day in Philadelphia.
Increasing Access to Naloxone

• Community education and distribution
• Educating and distributing naloxone to inmates of Philadelphia Department of Prisons
• Pharmacy outreach
Mayor’s Task Force

Task Force
23 members
January – March 2017

- Public Education & Prevention
- Treatment Access
- Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement
- Data
- Overdose Prevention & Harm Reduction