

# Substance Use Disorder Patient Experience with “Leave Behind Naloxone” in the Community

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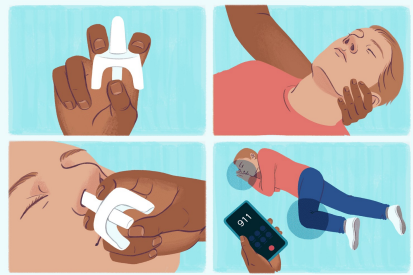


## Background

Opioid overdoses remain a major public health crisis.<sup>1</sup> Naloxone (Narcan), is an opioid antagonist that significantly reduces overdose mortality and effectively reverses the effects of opioid intoxication.<sup>2</sup> Extensive efforts have been made to distribute naloxone widely. In 2021, New Jersey introduced **Leave Behind Naloxone**, providing free naloxone to emergency medical responders to give to the public and encouraging the dissemination of opioid prevention information.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these efforts, questions remain about **how naloxone is used in real-world scenarios, particularly in community settings**. The Leave Behind Naloxone intervention, which equips individuals with naloxone post-overdose, is a key initiative aimed at empowering communities to respond to overdoses.<sup>4</sup>

**Our exploratory pilot study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of this intervention by surveying patients about their experiences with naloxone, focusing on community-level responses to overdoses.**



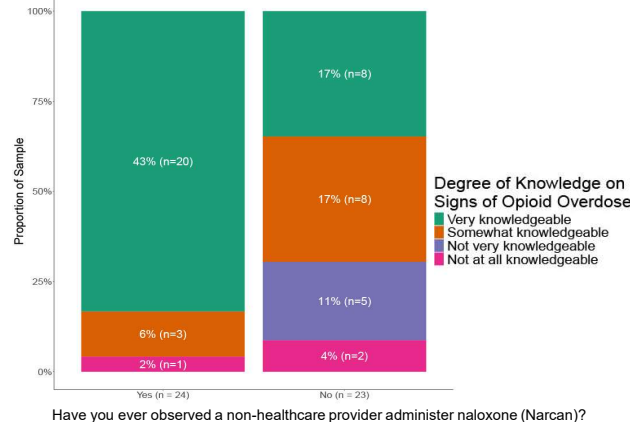
## Methods and Materials

EMS and toxicology physicians designed a survey that captures critical insights into patient experiences with leave-behind naloxone.

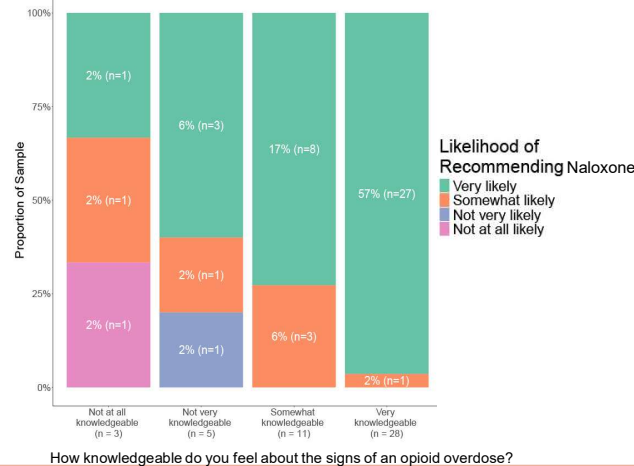
Participants (n = 52) were recruited from a low-barrier office-based opioid treatment center and were invited to complete a brief 10-minute survey.

Descriptive statistics and Pearson Chi-Square tests were used to summarize demographic information and examine relationships between key variables.

**Figure 1. Participants who observed a community overdose response were more likely to be knowledgeable on the signs of an opioid overdose (p=0.036)**



**Figure 2. Participants who were more knowledgeable were more likely to recommend naloxone (Narcan) to others (p=0.001)**



## Discussion

Observing naloxone use in the community had a significant association with awareness of overdose signs, suggesting that community involvement is key to addressing overdoses.

Participants who were knowledgeable and confident in using naloxone were more likely to recommend its use, showing the positive impact of public health initiatives on overdose response.

This study emphasizes the role of non-healthcare providers in managing opioid overdoses, with naloxone use increasing awareness of overdose signs. While community responses are vital, concerns arise about whether EMS is contacted.

## Future Directions

- Individuals may refuse EMS transport after naloxone use, increasing the risk of re-overdose and harm due to naloxone’s temporary effects.
- Research should also examine how naloxone training and confidence impact these decisions, particularly in high-risk communities.

Addressing these factors can inform public health strategies that support community-led overdose response and timely EMS involvement.

A limitation of this study is the small sample size, which affects generalizability. To build on our findings, we have conducted a larger-scale survey with 500 participants, currently in the data analysis phase.

## Acknowledgments & Disclosures

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