

Prevention of emergencies and deaths due to drug abuse

First aid courses and use of Naloxone by drug users

Experience gained with a model
project by Fixpunkt e. V., Berlin
Germany

Starting situation

- majority of overdoses occur in private homes
- often other drug users are present
- they are unable to react suitably

The general goals

to increase:

- the ability to act
- the readiness to take over responsibility when dealing with drug emergencies

Concrete aims

- to make the reasons for drug emergencies and risk situations known and recognised
- to improve awareness of symptoms
- the use of qualified first aid measures
- to provide additional options for action through the use of Naloxone
- to make use of professional emergency services

Target groups

- i.v. drug users
- drug users in substitution treatment
- occasional consumers
- new consumers
- detained consumers
- drug users who have abandoned therapy
- relatives
- professional helpers

Places where the project is to be realised

- contact stores
- advice centres
- medical substitution practices
- stationary facilities
- detention centres

Experiences from practical work

- intensive work is necessary to motivate drug consumers to confront this subject
- repression appears to be part of the personal survival strategy
- ideal to integrate the project in structures already existing
- the trust factor makes access to the drug users easier

Standards of first aid courses

- how the opiates work
- what happens during an overdose
- recognising an overdose
- special risks (e.g. mixed consumptions, after refraining)
- how Naloxone works, side effects
- indication, how to use Naloxone
- what to do when a helpless person is found
- practical exercises (e.g. taking a pulse, recovery position, cardiopulmonary resuscitation)
- how to call the emergency doctor

Details about the project from 1/12/1998 to 31/12/2002

- First aid courses:
 - 1.615 participants (1.030 professional helpers and relatives ; 525 drug users)
- Handing out Naloxone:
 - 264 drug users (172 were in substitution treatment)
- Follow-up contacts:
 - 101 made contact, some more than once
 - Totally 248 follow up contacts

Naloxone usage

- 70 participants injected Naloxone
- Totally 105 cases of Naloxone usage are documented

Benefits of using Naloxone

Number

indicated

98

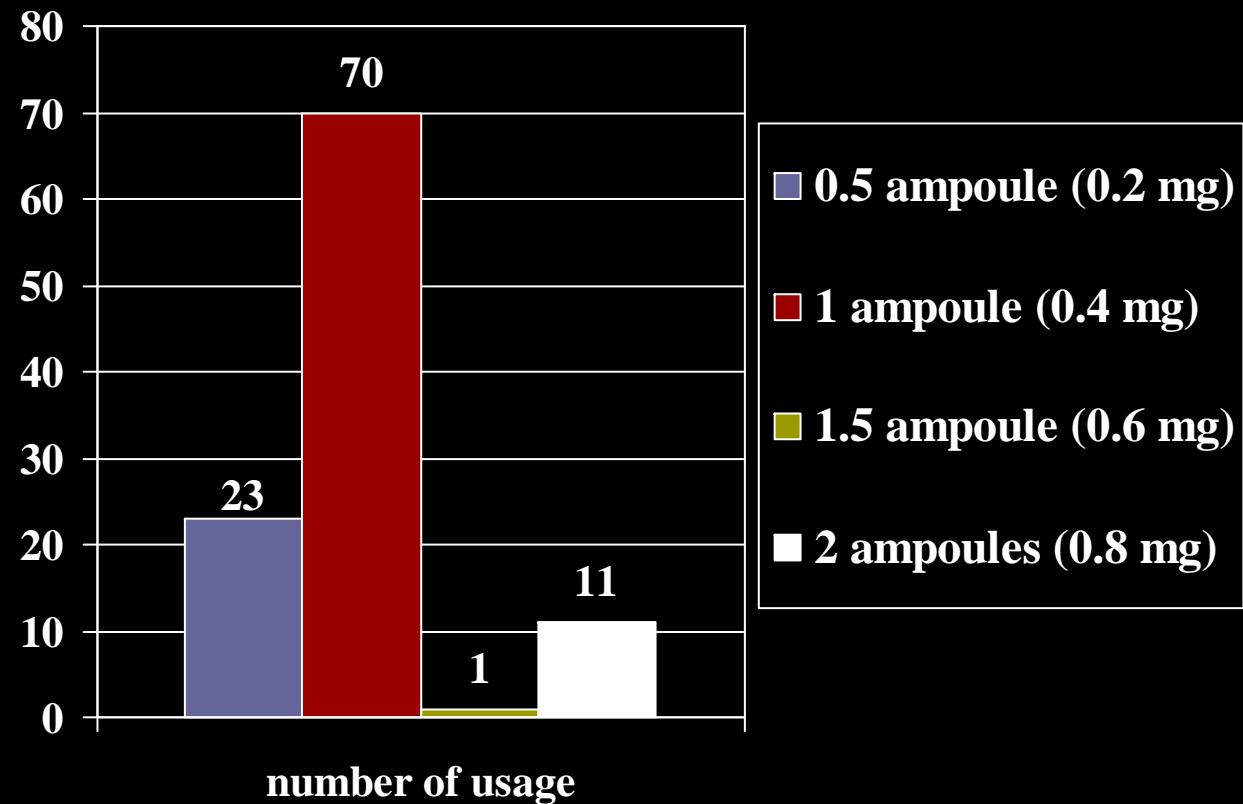
questionable

5

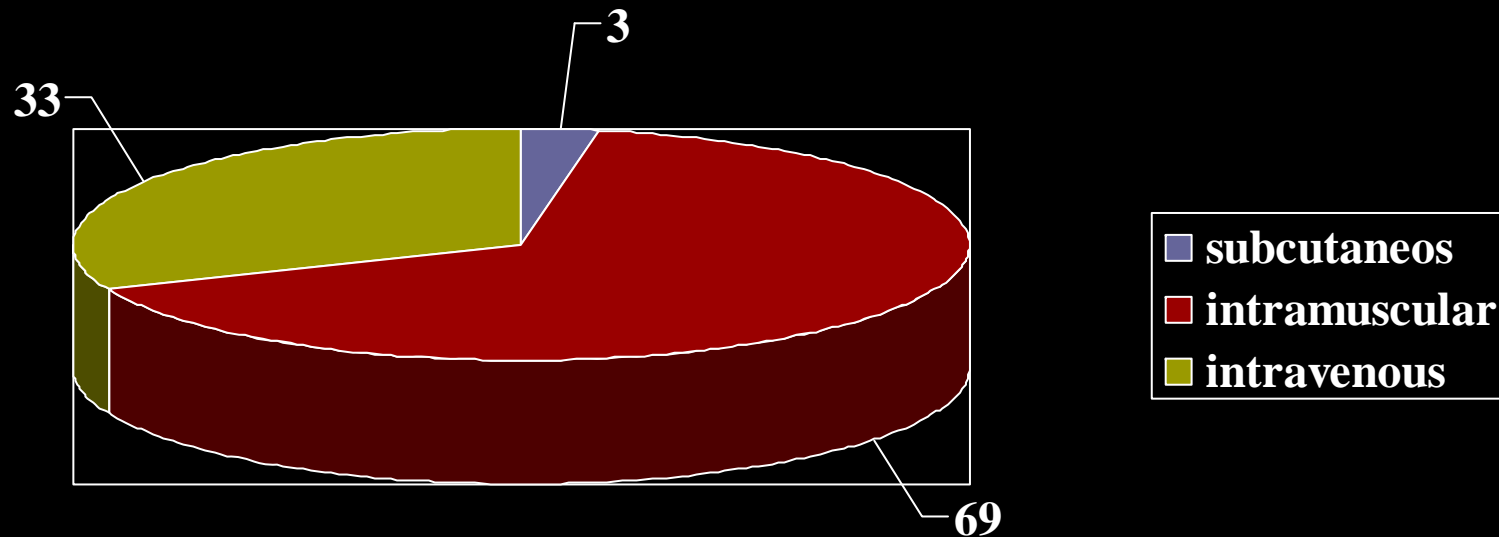
pointless

2

Naloxone dosage

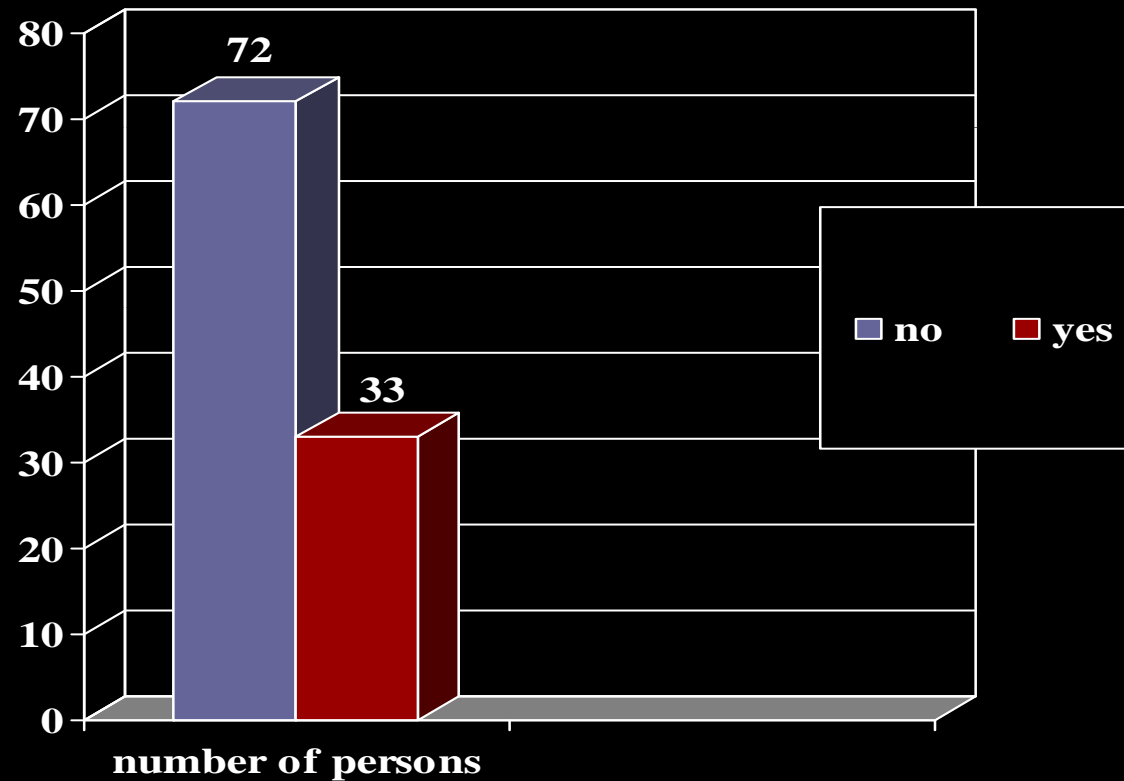


Injection method

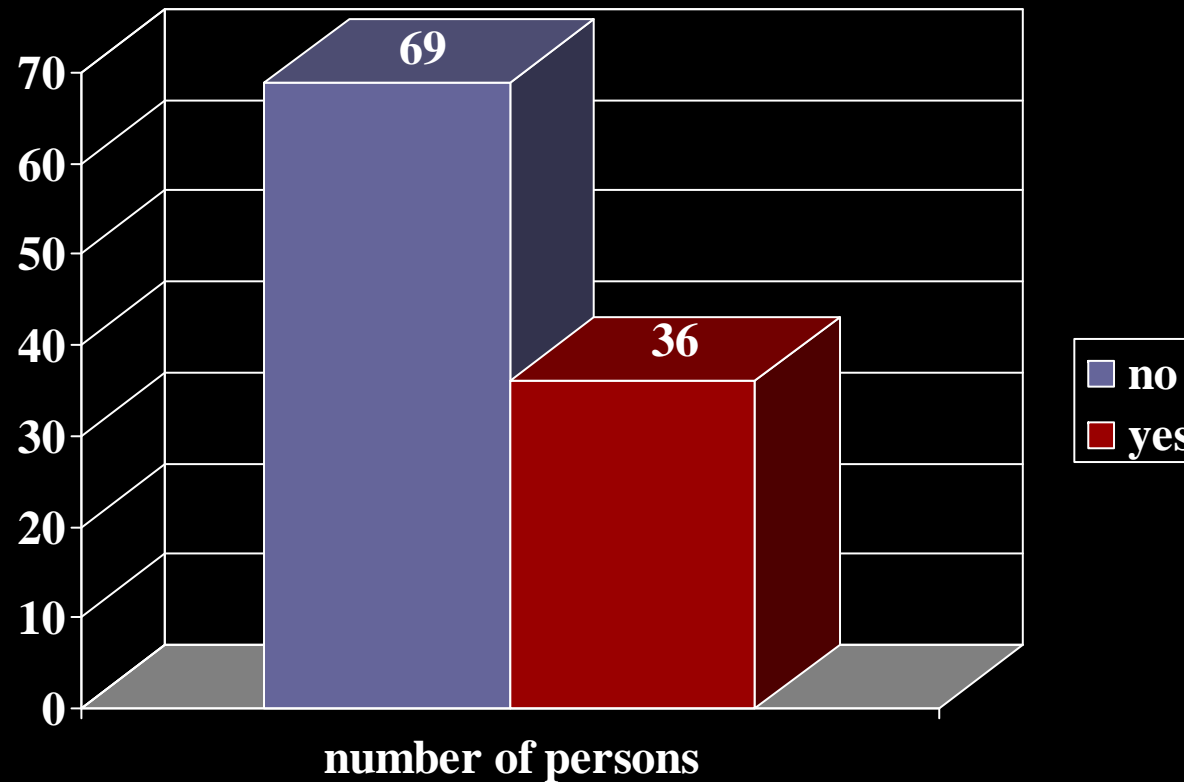


Number of injection

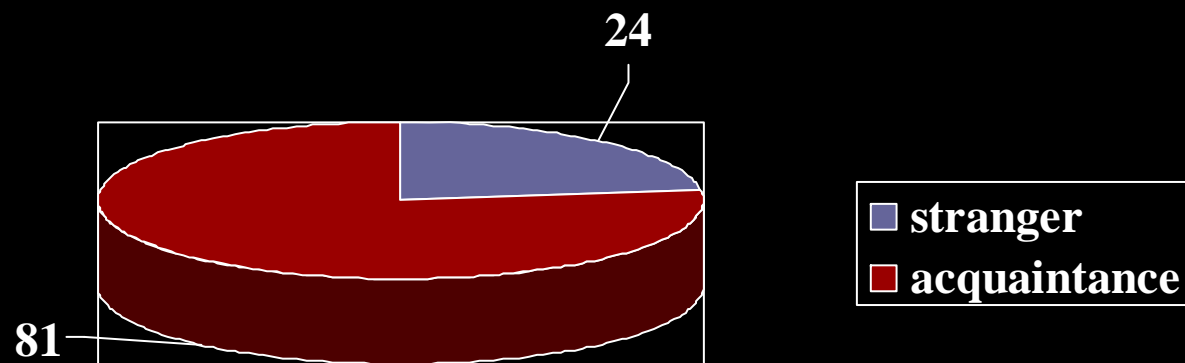
Withdrawal symptoms after Naloxone injection



Ambulance called additional to Naloxone usage

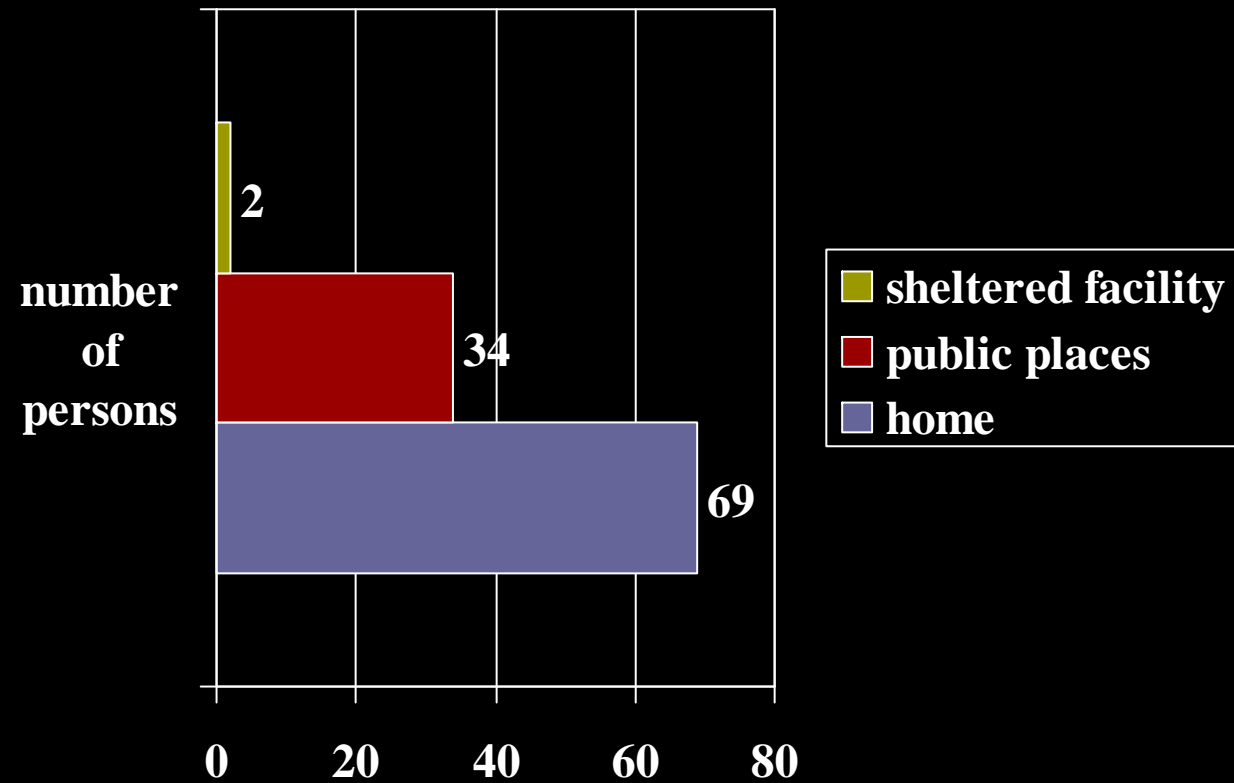


Affected person



Number of persons

Place of emergency



Evaluation

- education, handing out Naloxone to active i.v. drug users and the responsible of Naloxone is possible
- Naloxone was the motivation to take part in a first aid course
- difficult for non-professionals (not only for drug users!) to carry out resuscitation measures
- especially for i.v. drug users it is indeed practicable to inject Naloxone in emergencies
- the trust placed by Fixpunkt e.V. in the drug users ability to act responsibly, was received very positively

Model project, what followed?

- not possible to integrate primary emergency prevention measures conceptually and structurally in Germany
- no adequate follow-up financing after the model phase
- courses and Naloxone handouts are continued casually „in the background“
- very few follow-up contacts
- Courses for professional helpers have become established

Data 2006 & 2007

	Number
First aid courses	64
<u>Total participants</u>	<u>547</u>
professional helpers	369
drug users	178 (98 participants in the Naloxone project)
Follow-up contacts	17 (11 Naloxone usage)

Thank you very
much for your
attention!

You can find this presentation on our homepage:
www.fixpunkt.org

