

**Inmates are our favourite mates: corrections based take home naloxone** (Oral abstract 525)

**Issue:** Across Canada, there has been a significant increase in overdose related deaths since 2011. Inmates are overrepresented in these statistics and are experiencing increased rates of overdose related deaths in the first two weeks following release. From October 15th 2015 through to March 31st 2016, Lethbridge Correctional Centre (LCC) in collaboration with ARCHES (AIDS Outreach Community Harm Reduction Education Support Society), formerly HIV Connection, was the first Canadian correctional centre to offer naloxone training, prescribing, and dispensing to inmates at risk for an opioid overdose.

**Project:** This pilot project examined the feasibility of implementing a Take Home Naloxone program inside a Canadian Correctional facility. During the pilot project, 116 inmates were identified by nursing staff to be at risk for opioid overdose and referred for approval to participate by the addictions counsellor. 78 of the 116 inmates were approved for participation in the pilot project. Both group and individual training sessions were offered to eligible inmates by ARCHES staff. All prescribing and dispensing of kits was carried out by the Nurse Practitioner with ARCHES.

**Outcomes:** A total of 54 naloxone kits were prescribed and dispensed during the pilot project. Following the pilot project, LCC continued offering naloxone kits to inmates at risk for opioid overdose due to the identified need for naloxone accessibility with this population. This pilot project also led to all Alberta Correctional facilities offering take home naloxone to inmates. Subsequent to the pilot project, at least 4 successful opioid overdose reversals occurred with use of the naloxone kits. This is likely underrepresented due to loss of follow up or relocation of inmates. Many inmates who participated in the pilot project continued to access services at ARCHES, improving overall physical, social, and mental health outcomes.

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