

The influences of mandated training on pharmacist's clinical practice in the provision of opioid dependence treatment

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Issue

In January 2010 the ACT Government legislated that all pharmacists providing ODT services undertake training to ensure the safety and efficacy of their practice. This was a significant change in practice with some risk of the increased legislative burden being poorly received by pharmacists. An ongoing quality assurance program is used to ensure that the training meets legislative and professional requirements.

Approach

Pharmacists and other health professionals who attend ODT training conducted by the ACT Health Alcohol and Drug Services Senior Pharmacist are invited to complete an anonymous survey several months after training. A series of 5-point Likert items with a free text option is used to assess the influence of the training on pharmacists practice since completing the training. They are also asked to provide examples of practice changes that they have made, and whether they support the legislated training requirement.

2001

ACT Health Alcohol and Drug Services Senior Pharmacist identified a need for multi-disciplinary training for pharmacists, GPs and nurses involved in opioid dependence treatment. With the support of addiction specialists and nursing management, day-long multi-disciplinary training seminars were conducted annually or bi-annually for many years.

2008

Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2008
Part 15.1 Opioid dependency treatment guidelines
(1) The Minister may approve guidelines for the treatment of opioid dependency.
(2) Without limiting subsection (1), approved guidelines may make provision in relation to the prescribing and administration of buprenorphine and methadone to drug-dependent people.

2010

ACT Opioid Maintenance Treatment Guidelines

4.4 Authority to dispense
A community pharmacy must be licensed by the Chief Health Officer as an Opioid Dependency Treatment Centre, to dispense opioid maintenance treatment in the ACT. ACT Health requires that Opioid Dependency Treatment Centre licence holders ensure:
• all pharmacists dispensing opioid maintenance treatment at the licensed pharmacy have successfully completed the designated training program and short examination for dispensers in the ACT; and
To maintain status, pharmacists are required to undertake refresher training every five years.

2010–2012

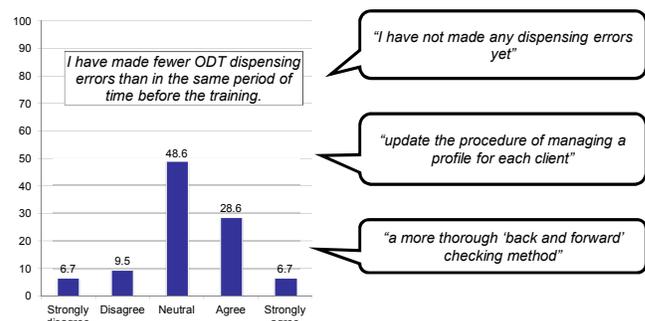
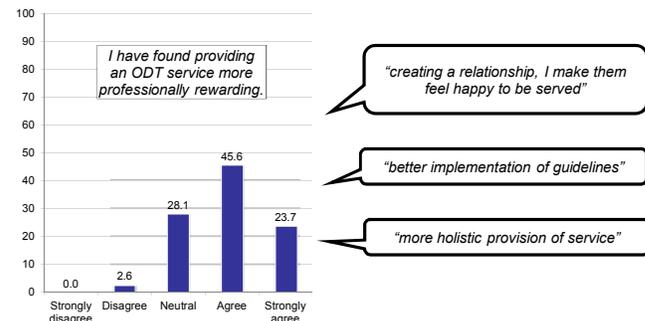
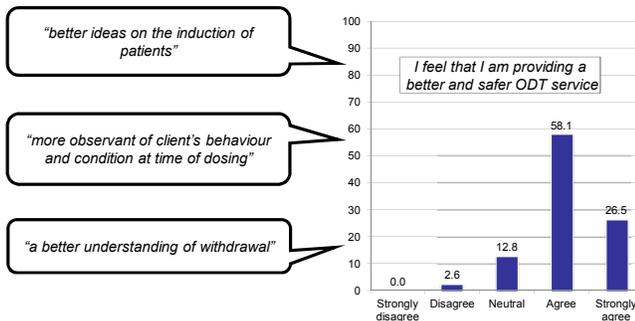
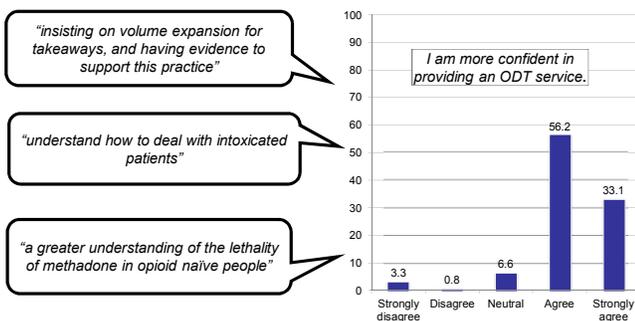
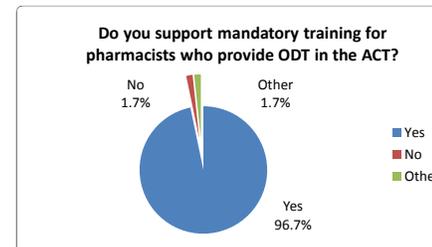
Increased and sustained demand for training.
Development of targeted opportunistic training.
519 health professionals (415 pharmacists, 44 doctors, 58 nurses and 2 social workers) have attended 68 training events.

Key findings

Since October 2011 approximately 200 surveys have been sent to pharmacists several months after they have completed ODT training, with 125 surveys returned. Key results are:

- 89% agree that their confidence in providing ODT had increased
- 70% report that providing ODT had become more professionally rewarding
- 84% felt that they were providing a better and safer ODT service
- 35% had made fewer ODT dispensing errors since the training (many had not made any errors previously and returned a "neutral" response to this question)
- 97% support mandatory training for pharmacists who provide ODT in the ACT

Since I attended the Opioid Maintenance Treatment training program:



Conclusion and Implications

- Legislating training requirements for pharmacists providing ODT in the ACT has improved clinical practice and professional satisfaction, and is strongly supported by pharmacists.
- Legislating similar requirements in other jurisdictions could improve clinical practice and professional satisfaction, and contribute to the best possible client outcomes.