

Understanding the Opioid Epidemic

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In the recent decades, the consumption of the opioid drugs has increased globally as the United States is ranked first. The addiction and misuse of the opioid drugs is a major national problem that has affected the social, economic and the public health welfare in general. Since the addiction and abuse of the opioid medication are resulting in deaths, then solutions to curb the problem should be invented.

The opioid drugs became popular in the late 1990s when pharmaceutical companies reassured the society that patients will not get addicted to the opioid pain reliever drugs. As a result, the healthcare experts began administering the drugs at a higher rate. Opioid are drugs that include pain relievers like fentanyl, morphine, codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, and the illegal heroin (Elsevier Ltd, 2015). The first opioid epidemic was recorded in the mid of the nineteenth century, and it was at the peak in the mid-1890s in the United States.

The opioid drug overdose rates increased as deaths increased due to opioid overdose, prescription opioid, illicit fentanyl manufacture and heroin use. The components of the opioid drug impersonate the chemicals in mind called the endorphins (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2017). The endorphins act as the messenger between the nerve cells. The opioid drugs, when taken, bring about relaxation, contentment, and pleasure and this makes the patients want them more. When a patient has been prescribed the opioid medications to consume for an extended period, their bodies become addicted to the drug, and they cannot live without it. The pleasure and joy that the opioid pain reliever drug caused are brought about through abuse and overdose of the drug. Many patients that are prescribed the opioid drug never have the intention of abusing or overdosing it but, the effects the drug has on their body, and brain cells force them to become addicts. The healthcare providers continue to administer the opioid medicines since they are the best painkillers for severe



pains as scientists still search for painkillers that do not have the pleasure that comes with the opioid drugs (Smith & Fine, 2013).

The opioid epidemic can be solved when better practices for pain management are invented. The best solution will be developing safe, non-addictive and effective drugs that will relieve chronic pains to the patients. Secondly, new medication methods and technologies should be invented, and they should be able to treat the opioid use disorders. Thirdly, enhanced reverse intrusions and overdose preventive measures should be presented to ease recovery and save the lives of patients. Lastly, endorsing the use of the overdose-reversing drugs is a solution to curb the opioid epidemic in the United States. (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2017)

In conclusion, when the solutions stated above are put into practice, then the opioid epidemic will be a forgone problem. The United States is suffering an economic burden due to the opioid crisis, and these solutions will be of great help to the social, economic, and public health welfare when implemented.



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