

NR 505 Week 1 Discussion: Area of Interest in NP - The Overuse of Opioid Drugs

Over the course of the next eight weeks, we will be examining concepts related to nursing research and the translation of evidence to practice. To help you better understand the process, you will be identifying a practice issue for nurse practitioners. You will develop a PICOT question associated with the issue, find evidence to support a change in practice, and present your recommendations for change to your peers. This week, we will work on helping you refine your area of interest so that you will be able to develop a concise question for next week's assignment. You are encouraged to use the area of interest you chose for the project in NR500NP and/or NR501NP; however, you may choose a different area if you wish.

Select an issue in nurse practitioner (NP) practice that is of interest to you and in which you would like to see a practice change occur. Conduct a review of literature to see what is currently known about the topic. In 1-2 paragraphs, describe the scope and relevance of the issue and your recommended change. Provide reference support from at least two outside scholarly sources to support your ideas.

Answer:

The overuse of opioid drugs is a serious crisis affecting millions of Americans (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). In 2018, opioid overdoses claimed the lives of 128 people per day in the United States alone (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). Pharmaceutical companies are largely to blame for assuring the health care industry that these drugs were non-habit forming (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). Due to the nature of these claims, medical providers prescribed opioids at a larger rate leading to widespread overuse and subsequent use of street drugs such as heroin (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). About 80% of heroin users report first misusing prescription opioids and 6% of patients prescribed opioids will transition to heroin use (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020).

Overall, roughly 29% of patients misuse opioids that have been prescribed. It is estimated that 29% of who are prescribed opioids misuse them and up to 8% develop an opioid use disorder.