The Impact of Video-Based Education on Safe Injection Techniques in People Who Inject Drugs

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ABSTRACT

- Injection drug use is on the rise in the United States, yet research on the impact of safe injection education on preventing injection-related injuries, such as skin and soft tissue infections (SSTI), is limited.
- The principal objective of this study is to ascertain if video education can improve knowledge regarding sterile technique for intravenous drug use and reduce rates of SSTIs in people who inject drugs (PWID).

INTRODUCTION

- Syringe service programs (SSPs): community-based organizations aimed at reducing the harm associated with substance use providing sterile injection supplies, Narcan, screening and referrals to treatment for infectious diseases, etc.
- There is limited data on the impact of education of safe injection on preventing SSTIs and other bloodborne infections in PWID.

MATERIALS & METHODS

- Session 1: 23 participants of ekiM Syringe Service Program in Greenville, NC were recruited to complete a pretest survey, watch our video on safe injection education, and complete a posttest survey.
- Health behavior information was also collected, which included types of drug use, preferred injection sites, history of SSTI, self-treatment techniques, hospitalizations, frequency of Narcan use, Hepatitis C status, insurance coverage, and healthcare access.
- Session 2: 4 - 6 weeks following the Session 1 participants were asked to retake the knowledge test and answer questions regarding SSTI occurrences.

RESULTS

Safe Injection Education Scores

- Average posttest score was 90.2% correct, which is an increase of 11.4% from the average pretest score of 78.8% (p = 0.039).
- Average follow-up knowledge test score from Session 2 led to an overall increase of 7.81% (p = 0.639).

Health Behaviors

- 52.2% (12) reported ever having skin and soft tissue infections (SSTI) & of those 12 respondents, 50% had an SSTI in the past 12 months.
- 52.2% of participants used unprescribed medications to treat their SSTI & 7 of the 12 respondents (58.33%) who reported a previous SSTI required hospitalization and intravenous antibiotic therapy as treatment.
- 13 (56.52%) of the 23 respondents reported testing positive for Hepatitis C at some point.

Insurance Coverage & Medical Care Access

- 60.9% reported having no insurance coverage, while 21.7% reported having Medicare/Medicaid.
- 50% had an SSTI in the past 12 months.

DISCUSSION

- Our study suggests that PWID tend to have a foundational knowledge of safe injection techniques and show great levels of resilience in self-treatment of SSTIs.
- Safe injection education is an important tool in empowering PWID to prevent injection-related injuries and improve clinical outcomes for this population.
- As the harm reduction model becomes more accepted in the medical field, educational training for medical personnel should focus on teaching and supporting people who use drugs so the overall threshold for seeking care for infection in this population is lowered and complications and the associated costs are avoided.

REFERENCES


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Figure 1. Session Protocols

Figure 2. Safe Injection Questionnaire

Figure 3. Safe Injection Test Scores

Figure 4. Insurance Coverage of Participants

Figure 5. Safe Injection Video