Prescribe Safe Monterey County Initiative Large Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 23, 2019
Time: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Hazen Education Center
Montage Medical Group – Ryan Ranch
2 Upper Ragsdale Dr., Bldg. A – Monterey, CA 93940

Purpose:
Provided annual update on the progress the initiative has made in the past year. Also, solicited input and assistance in current and future projects to expand capacity and outreach.

Summary:
After a brief introduction by Dr. Grover.

Following the introduction, time was allotted for attendees to introduce themselves and provide brief descriptions of their agency’s efforts to address opioid related disparities within the community.

Dr. Chavis assisted in recognizing Deputy District Attorney Amy Patterson for her astounding contribution to the initiative’s mission and successes. Amy has been re-assigned to the Truancy Department within the District Attorney’s office and will be succeeded by Deputy District Attorney Steve Sommers. Welcome Mr. Sommers!

An overview of the coalition’s strategic goals was provided. Two of the six goals have been achieved!

A brief update on new state legislature was presented and SB 212 (Pharmaceutical responsibility for medication and sharps disposal), AB 2760 (Naloxone prescribing requirements), and AB 2859 (pharmacy safe storage products) were highlighted.

Activities the coalition participated in were briefly shared with the group. There were a substantial number of prevention, education, and harm reduction events in which Drs. Grover and Close were involved in, including a visit to the White House.

Project updates were presented by Dr. Grover and Dr. Close. The initiative has had a great year and among 2018 accomplishments are:

• A continued substantial decline in Monterey County’s overdose deaths
• Continued expansion of Naloxone supply and training of county law enforcement agencies
• Improvement of directories and referral guides for SUD services
• Collaboration with the Monterey County Sheriff Coroner’s Office continues and Critical Events Letters keep going out to prescribing professionals to alert them of deaths related to opioid use.
• CHOMP practitioners are now being alerted when non-fatal overdose events occur.
• Drug take-back bins are now available in Soledad (Soledad Pharmacy) and Salinas (Star Pharmacy)
• CHOMP now has a sharps take-back bin to complement the two existing medication bins
• Prescribe Safe Monterey County Initiative (PSMCI) worked with the California chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (Cal/ACEP) to create state guidelines for treating opiate addiction in the ED (Emergency Department), including creating program at CHOMP
• Expansion of non-opioid pain management services in the Emergency Department at CHOMP
• Publication of *first ever* study of using TENS units for pain relief in the Emergency Department
• Assisted with the opening of a sobering center in Salinas!
• Drug Medi-Cal Waiver for Monterey County
• Mail drug take back program offered by Hospice providers and now part of the onboarding of new patients

Among new projects and goals, Prescribe Safe is currently working with United Way of Monterey County to improve substance use disorder (SUD) referral pathways. They are also working on dispensing Naloxone to all overdose patients at the time of discharge from the CHOMP ED. CHOMP and Natividad Medical Center have both applied for the ED-Bridge grant. There is work in progress to install a drug take-back bin at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital (SVMH). Actively working on developing guidelines for county providers on alternative/complementary medicine for pain management. Working collaboratively with Sun Street Centers to make the Recovery Run a success.

Some new topics were shared with the group, among them:
• Growth of the coalition and ensuring its effective integrity.
• Resources for providers caring for patients on chronic opioid therapy, specifically who will safely maintain or taper them?
• Providing these resources for chronic pain patients
• The problem many patients are facing when their pharmacies are becoming increasingly hesitant to fill schedule 2 drugs

Input from attendees was solicited. The topic of challenges in getting opioid prescriptions filled was a dominating topic during this time. Prescription fraud, pharmacy protocols, and limited opioid accessibility for legitimate pain management, such as palliative care and cancer patients (among others) were discussed. Possible adjustments in prescribing rituals, such as including a diagnosis code on the script, or providing the pharmacy with a signed provider-
patient contract focusing on patient’s commitment to responsibly use opioid medication were topics of interest.

PSMCI goals for 2019 were shared. They include:

- Improve access to SUD treatment
- Improve pain management without the use of opioid therapy

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm.