



Safe Med LA

Expanding Naloxone Access

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Outline

- Prescribing in Los Angeles County: By the Numbers
- Overview of Safe Med LA
- Naloxone Strategy
 - Pharmacy Practice, Naloxone Access, and Law Enforcement Action Teams
 - Opportunities for Synergy
 - Challenges/Strategies
- Summary



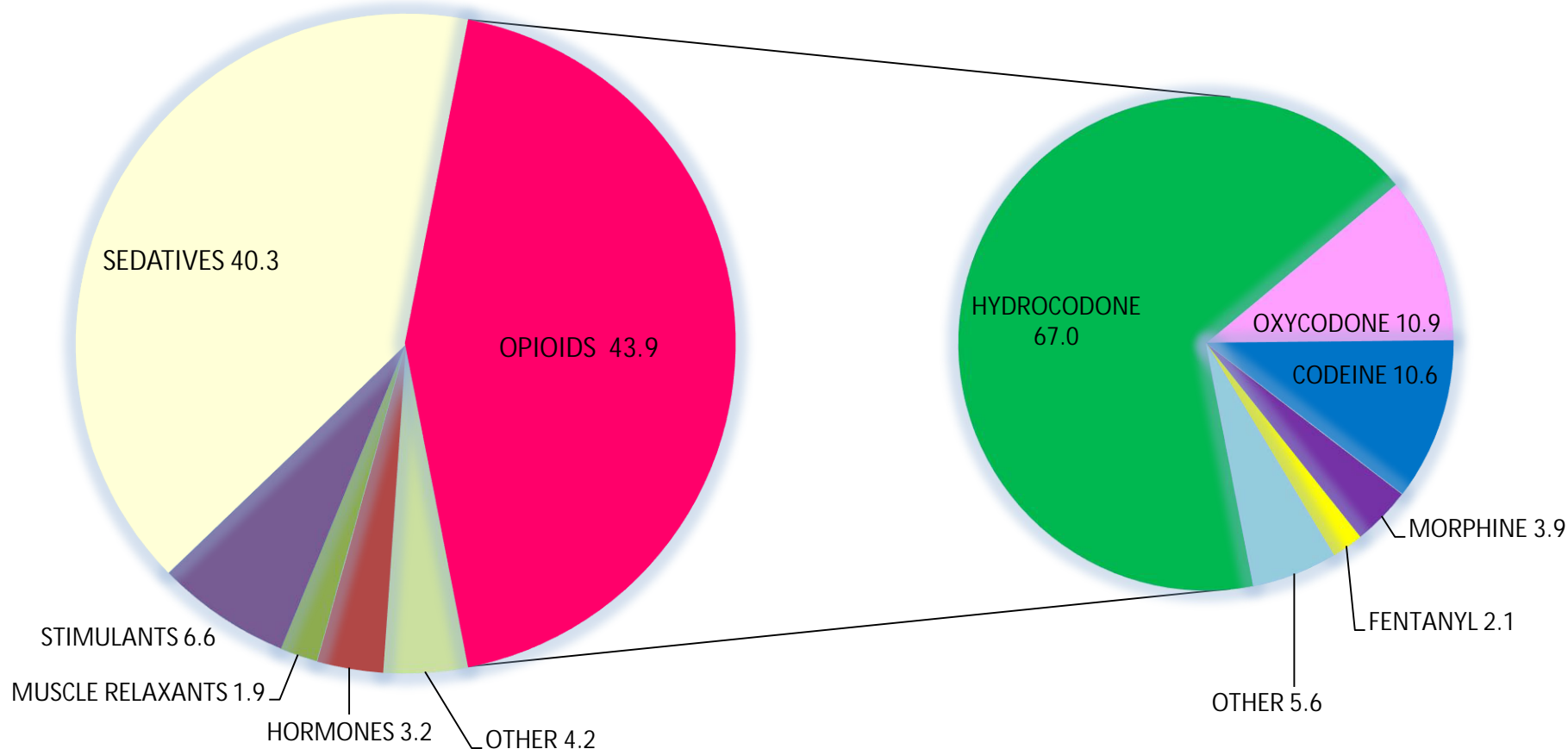


Prescribing in Los Angeles County (LAC): By the Numbers

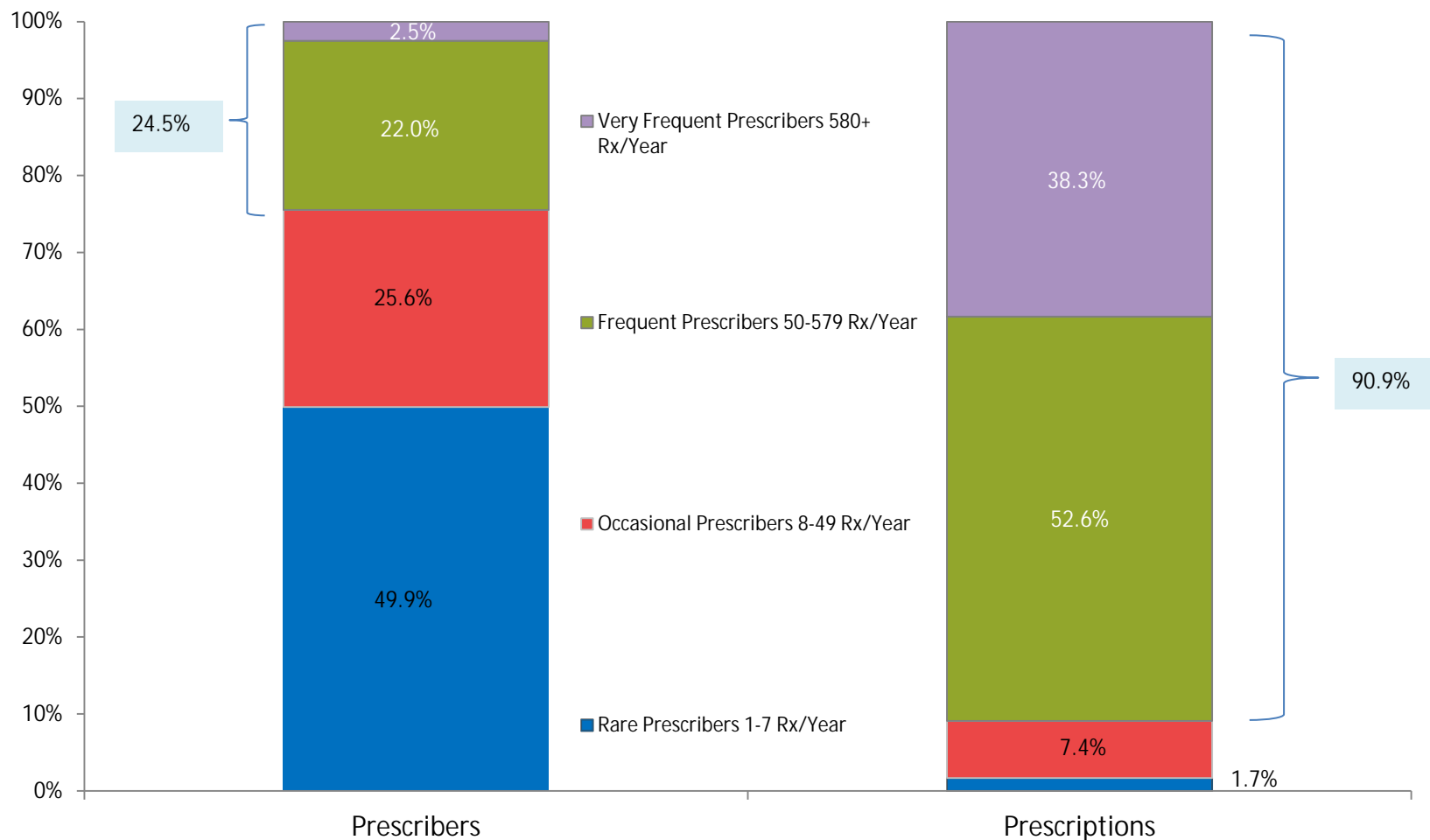


Prescriptions Filled in LAC, 2012

N = 9,605,765



25% of LAC prescribers wrote 91% of opioid prescriptions (2012; N = 4,142,662)



Safe Med LA

- Safe Med LA is a broad, cross-sector coalition that is taking a coordinated and multi-pronged approach to comprehensively address prescription drug abuse in Los Angeles County
 - www.SafeMedLA.org
- Five-year strategic plan* guides the work of Safe Med LA.
 - Overall goal → Decrease prescription drug abuse deaths in LAC by 20%.
 - "9-6-10" Approach
 - 9 Action Teams
 - 6 priority areas
 - 10 key objectives

focusing on
with



SAFE MED LA
Prescription Drug Abuse Coalition
Los Angeles County

**Los Angeles County
Prescription Drug Abuse
Strategic Plan**

*Working together to reduce
Prescription drug abuse & overdose deaths*



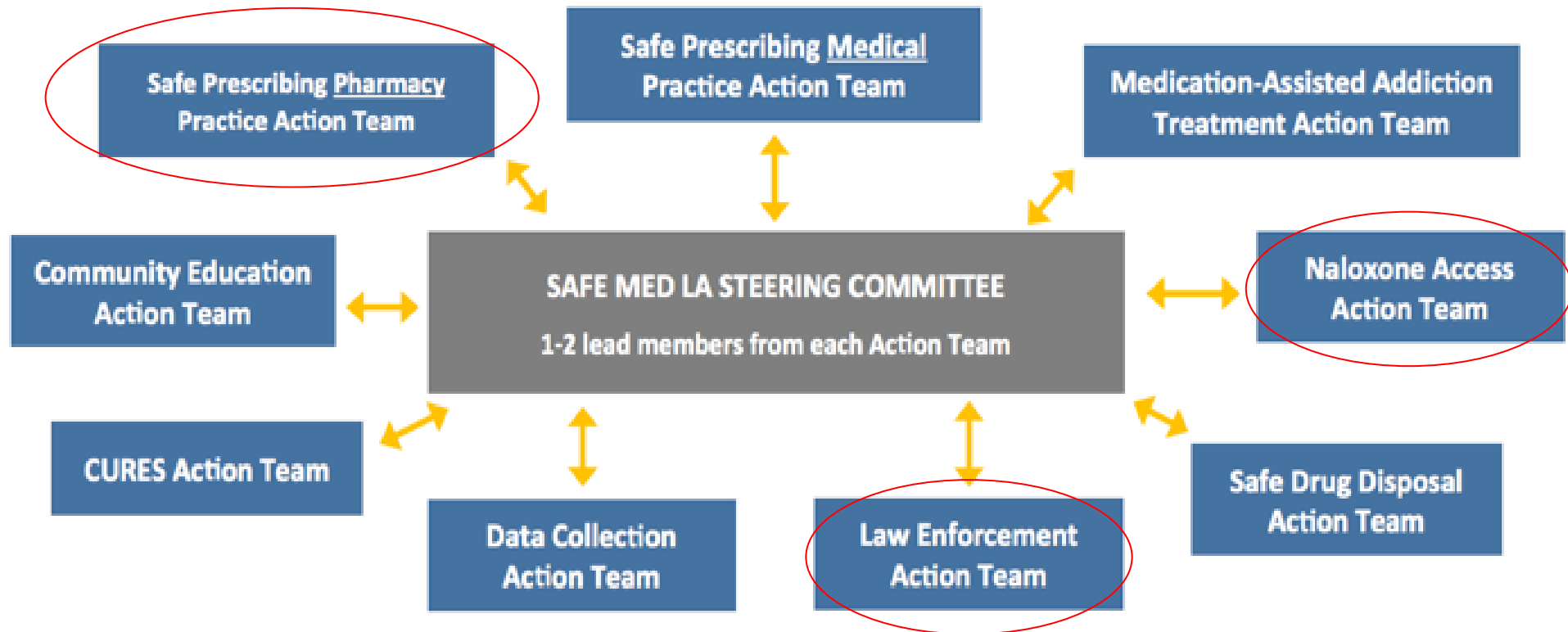
*More information on the Los Angeles County Prescription Drug Abuse Strategic Plan and Safe Med LA is available at:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/Plan/StrategicPlan.htm>

9 Action Teams



Safe Med LA Coalition



Safe Med LA's Naloxone Strategy



Naloxone: Key Points of Recognition

- Lifesaving tool in the opioid epidemic → Naloxone is to opioid overdoses what epinephrine is to anaphylactic shock.
- Research has demonstrated those at highest risk for opioid overdose are individuals who experience periods of reduced opioid tolerance (e.g., those leaving SUD treatment facilities, jail/prison).
- Intra-nasal (needleless) naloxone formulations are typically preferred, though cost often guides distribution strategy.
 - First responders only interested in intra-nasal formulations.
- Opioid misuse is evolving and increasingly involving higher potency opioids such as fentanyl & carfentanil → higher doses and multiple doses of naloxone will likely be necessary in the future in order to evolve with drug use trends.
- Pharmacists play an important role in naloxone access in CA.

Naloxone in Los Angeles County

- Where we started from:
 - LA Overdose Prevention Task Force since 2006 focused on expanding naloxone access focused on direct service, policy, & research.
 - Small network of naloxone distribution programs based out of harm reduction and SUD treatment provider network.
- Where we want to go:
 - Expand naloxone access to those at highest risk for opioid overdoses.
 - Jail naloxone distribution program
 - Expand naloxone distribution programs via SUD providers → leverage increased access via the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System Waiver
 - Engage and activate the pharmacist community to help expand naloxone access across health systems (physical health, mental health, SUD)
 - Ensure first responders, including law enforcement, have access to naloxone.

Pharmacists and the Opioid Epidemic

- Pharmacists are often the last health professional to speak with an individual before they access their prescription drugs, including opioid pain medications.
 - Important educational opportunity → safe opioid use and pain management, overdose prevention, alternatives to opioids, etc.



Safe Prescribing Pharmacy Practice Action Team

- Members: Pharmacists from various backgrounds (health plans, academics, policy)
- Focuses:
 - Provide education for pharmacists about their critical responsibility and role in the dispensing of opioid pain relievers, particularly when prescribing practices are inconsistent with recommended safe prescribing practices.
 - Education and training for the furnishing of naloxone, which can be provided in CA without a physician's prescription (pharmacist's prescription required) with certain training requirements (per regulations adopted by the CA State Board of Pharmacy effective January 2016).



Naloxone Access Action Team



**KEEP
CALM
AND
CARRY
NALOXONE**

- Members: Harm reduction providers, syringe exchange programs, SUD treatment providers, and researchers.
- Focuses:
 - Increase number of naloxone kits provided to clients throughout LAC.
 - Work with Safe Prescribing Pharmacy Practice Action Team to ensure that pharmacists have the education and training necessary to furnish naloxone without a physician's prescription (pharmacist's prescription required).
 - Collaborate with the Law Enforcement Action Team to explore naloxone access in the criminal justice setting.

Law Enforcement Action Team

- Members: LA Sheriff's Department
- Focuses:
 - Continue Safe Drug Drop-Off Program within the Sheriff's Dept.
 - Increase information-sharing in order to help identify problematic prescribers and instances of "doctor shopping."
 - Collaborate with Naloxone Access Action Team to explore naloxone access in the criminal justice setting.



Synergy: Pharmacists & Naloxone

- Pain Management Conference sponsored by LA Care and Safe Med LA, and jointly coordinated by Pharmacy Practice Action Team & Naloxone Access Action Team
 - Focused on chronic pain management, medication-assisted treatment, and naloxone.
 - Naloxone focus
 - 200 pharmacists who attended conference received the required 1 hour of CE training and left the conference with the certification necessary to furnish naloxone without a physician's prescription (pharmacist's prescription required).
 - Role-playing around initiating discussions with patients/family/providers about safe opioid use, naloxone, and safe prescribing.

Synergy: Law Enforcement & Naloxone

- Connected the manufacturer of intra-nasal naloxone with first responders throughout LA County → LA Sheriff's, Police, and Fire Departments at various stages of considering piloting naloxone programs.
- Relationship building between Safe Med LA leads and various criminal justice and first responder partners:
 - Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee
 - Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
 - Los Angeles Police Department
 - Los Angeles Fire Department
 - Police Chief's Association

Challenges & Associated Strategies

- Funding for naloxone (particularly intra-nasal formulation)
 - Intra-nasal formulation is highly preferred by most first responders and providers, but current discounted price point of \$75 per 2 doses is limiting.
- Strategies
 - Engaged manufacturer about donations of intra-nasal naloxone for pilot programs among first responders.
 - Plan to leverage expanded naloxone access via Medi-Cal and Drug Medi-Cal formularies.
 - Engaging State on federal grants awarded to California to address the opioid epidemic, including opioid overdose prevention.

Challenges & Associated Strategies (cont'd)

- Awareness and Training for Pharmacists Furnishing Naloxone without a Physician's Prescription
 - Most pharmacy staff are familiar with this regulatory change, but many remain uncertified to prescribe naloxone while others are challenged with incorporating naloxone prescribing into their workflow.
- Strategies
 - Education about this change and how pharmacists can become certified to furnish naloxone without a prescription.
 - Utilizing various messaging strategies
 - Conferences
 - Webinars
 - Engaging health plans
 - Offer training opportunities for pharmacists to get certified to furnish naloxone.

Challenges & Associated Strategies (cont'd)

- Initiating Conversations with Patients/Family/Providers about Opioid Risks, Naloxone, and Prescribing Habits
 - Pharmacists have expressed a need for additional training on initiating conversations with patients and family about opioid risks and naloxone.
 - Pharmacists have expressed a particular interest in receiving more training on initiating conversations with other health providers their prescribing habits.
- Strategies
 - Role-playing with pharmacists within the Pharmacy Practice Action Team.
 - Exploring engaging pharmacy students early in their training.

Challenges & Associated Strategies (cont'd)

- Law Enforcement Engagement
 - Engaging law enforcement has been challenging due to their need to balance various priorities, concerns about patrol officers using injectable naloxone, and concerns about price point of intra-nasal naloxone formulation.
- Strategies
 - Relationship building and telling the story about how the opioid epidemic is relevant to criminal justice partners, and the role they play in this public health crisis.
 - Law Enforcement Naloxone Toolkit has been useful:
<https://www.bjatraining.org/tools/naloxone/Naloxone-Background>
 - Engaged intra-nasal naloxone manufacturer to explore opportunities to make this preferred formulation more widely available throughout the County.

Summary

- 2 Key Takeaways from Safe Med LA naloxone access efforts:
 1. CULTURE CHANGE is necessary and will require time and work engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders around:
 - Changing the public's perception of how they address their pain and what is considered "acceptable pain"
 - Increasing collaboration and communication between pharmacists, prescribers, and patients/families on naloxone and safe opioid use.
 - Changing perceptions of the role of law enforcement in the opioid epidemic.
 2. Identification of opportunities to SYNERGIZE GOALS across stakeholders is critical → leveraging overlap between Action Teams to maximize influence.



Thank you!

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www.SafeMedLA.org