Effect of naloxone access law type variability and enactment on naloxone claims in the Medicaid population from 2013 through 2017

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Methods
- Primary data sources used for this study were:
  - NAL dates and law types were compiled from the Prescription Drug Abuse Policy System
  - Where state specific data was reported, naloxone claim counts and costs were aggregated by quarter and by payer type
  - NALRx was associated with increased naloxone use and opioid overdose
  - Multivariable generalizations estimating equations (GEE) were used for the outcome of NALRx trends and controlling for law type (e.g., standing orders, pharmacist prescribing authority (PPA), third-party dispensing, and pre-protocol dispensing), state-specific variables, and year

Results
- By mid-2017, every state had passed a NAL
- The year with the most NAL enactments was 2015
- NAL specifications varied by state
- 46 states allow for third-party prescriptions
- Pharmacy dispensing without a written prescription is allowed in:
  - 44 states by standing order
  - 14 states by protocol
- A total of 30 states were included in the analysis with 17 states reporting both FFS and MCO NALRx
- Naloxone utilization has increased each year with the greatest increase starting in 2015 (corresponding with the largest number of new law enactments)
- Multivariable analyses indicated that the inclusion of SO and PPA indicated 1.77x and 3.72x higher NALRx, respectively (p < 0.05)
- MCOs were also independently associated with 2.58x NALRx versus FFS (p < 0.017)
- Additionally, a 1.10x increase in NALRx was observed for each unit increase in a state’s crude overdose death rate (p < 0.001)

Conclusions
- This study shows that the passage of NALs led to an increase in the number of claims for naloxone dispensed to the Medicaid population
- Increased naloxone claims could mean an increase in access for Medicaid members for this life-saving drug
- Previous research found that a standing order for naloxone was associated with increased NALRx, however pharmacist prescribing authority was not included in that study
- This research adds to current knowledge regarding effective laws for increasing access to naloxone and could assist states in evaluating which legislation to enact in an effort to increase access to naloxone for the Medicaid population

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