PRESCRIPTION OPIOID DEATH RATES ARE GREATER FOR FEMALES THAN MALES

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Disclosures

• Most manufacturers of prescription opioids or stimulants subscribe to RADARS System.

• RADARS System is the property of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, a political subdivision of the State of Colorado.

• Subscribers receive information, but do not participate in developing the System, data collection, or analysis of the data. They do not have access to the raw data.

• Employees are prohibited from personal financial relationships with any company.
Background

• Women more likely to be prescribed rx opioids than men
• Women more likely to use rx opioids chronically than men
• Women more likely to receive rx for higher doses of opioids
• Women more likely to receive rx for opioids in combination with sedatives
Aims

• In July 2013, CDC showed rx opioid deaths rising more rapidly for women than men

• We examined data from the RADARS® System Poison Center Program for similar trends
Methods

• RADARS® System Poison Center Program
  • 49 poison centers across US
  • Adult deaths
  • Mention oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone, morphine, oxymorphone, tapentadol, tramadol
  • January 2006- June 2014
Methods

[Map of the United States with states colored blue and some states highlighted in grey. The legend indicates that blue represents 'Covered'.]
Methods

• Average quarterly changes in the prescriptions per population compared between genders

• Poisson regression for death rates
  • Adjusted for gender-specific population, prescriptions dispensed
  • Covariates

• Polynomial regression
  • Trend in number of prescriptions per population by gender
Results
Discussion

• Similar patterns to CDC data through 2010
  • While magnitudes of mortality rates differ between CDC and PC data, trends are consistent
  • RADARS data are more timely
• Trends in opioid prescribing show rising rates that have leveled off since 2011
Discussion

• Trends in rx opioid deaths were similar between genders

• BUT both population adjusted and prescription adjusted rates were higher for women than men

• Higher death rates for women may be due to greater drug availability
Acknowledgements

• Coauthors:
  • Marie-Claire Le Lait, Geoff Severtson, Becki Bucher-Bartelson, Richard Dart
References

• SAMHSA. Substance abuse treatment: Addressing the specific needs of women. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) 51. 2009.
Questions?