

# “The Opioid Crisis A Nurses Role”

Connecting African American Nurses and Cops through Crisis

Lieutenant Kenneth Harris, Jr., (ret.) PhD  
Milwaukee (WI) Police Department  
Concordia University Wisconsin



# Patterns of Disparity

"**Racial disparity**" is **defined** as existing in the criminal justice system when "the proportion of a **racial**/ethnic group within the control of the system is greater than the proportion of such groups in the general population."

~ The National Criminal Justice Reference Service

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=183513>

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# Patterns of Disparity

Every mainstream law enforcement agency, organization, healthcare company or agency all agree that treatment is better than criminalization.

How many of you agree?



# Patterns of Disparity

Crack Cocaine in comparison to Opioids,  
the problem is...?



# Patterns of Disparity

...organizations continue to attempt to equate both of these epidemics, when crack disproportionately effected African Americans on every level, especially incarceration for possession.



# Patterns of Disparity: Crack Cocaine

"I signed a bill that made the problem worse. And I want to admit it," **President Bill Clinton** said during his remarks at the NAACP Convention on Wednesday, July 15, 2015. "In that bill, there were longer sentences and most of these people are in prison under state law, but the federal law set a trend. And that was overdone, we were wrong about that," Clinton said. "The good news is we had the biggest drop in crime in history... The bad news is we had a lot of people who were essentially locked up who were minor actors for way too long."

Yet....



# Patterns of Disparity: Opioids

The National Center for State Courts suggests:

- Invest in local, state, and regional multidisciplinary, system-level strategic planning to identify policies or practice changes that can improve treatment engagement and reduce the risk of overdose death.
- Implement law-enforcement diversion programs, prosecutor diversion programs, or both to deflect or divert individuals with substance-use disorders from the criminal justice system into treatment at the earliest possible point.



# Patterns of Disparity: Opioids

The National Center for State Courts suggests:

- Expand court diversion and sentencing options that provide substance-abuse treatment as an alternative to incarceration. Problem-solving courts, such as adult drug courts or veterans treatment courts, are the most notable examples of effective approaches.
- Incorporate strategic screening questions designed to identify criminal-justice-involved individuals at high-risk for overdose death into all criminal-justice-agency intake forms.





# Patterns of Disparity

For opioid abuse, the agreement is treatment above all else. Incarceration is a distant second on the list.



# Patterns of Disparity

With opioid deaths disproportionately high among whites (80% of opioid overdose deaths in 2017), drug addiction and overdose risks are no longer problems just for poor minorities. Perhaps, not coincidentally, the approach to addressing the problem has changed.



# What are the Cops Saying

They're mimicking the courts, healthcare,  
and treatment facilities.



# What are the Cops Saying

IACP: Pre-arrest diversion

PoliceOne.com: Pre-arrest diversion

Officer.com: Task Force and Naloxone

National Sheriff's Association:  
Naloxone/Treatment



# Danger To All

The introduction of Fentanyl and Carfentanil is the most hazardous for law enforcement and promotes the need and the use of Naloxone.



# Danger To All

*Morphine* used to alleviate pain; *Heroin* is processed from morphine; *Oxycodone* is a semisynthetic opioid for pain; *Fentanyl* is 50 times stronger than oxycodone; *Carfentanil* is 100 times stronger than Fentanyl and 10,000 times more stronger than morphine.



# Disconnection

The police are disconnected because they do not see the aftermath, the emergency room treatment, the death if it occurs in the hospital, and...



# Disconnection

...the police do not get to see the person held accountable for their crime.

Some states have gone so far as to enact laws shielding users from the “Len Bias Law.”





# EXAMPLE: 2017 WISCONSIN ACT 33

Immunity From Criminal Prosecution  
2017 Wisconsin Act 33 retains the  
immunity from criminal prosecution for  
possession offenses for an aider.



# 2017 WISCONSIN ACT 33

However, under the Act, for the aider to be immune from criminal prosecution, an aider's attempt to obtain assistance for the aided person must occur immediately after the aider believes the aided person is suffering from the overdose or other adverse reaction.

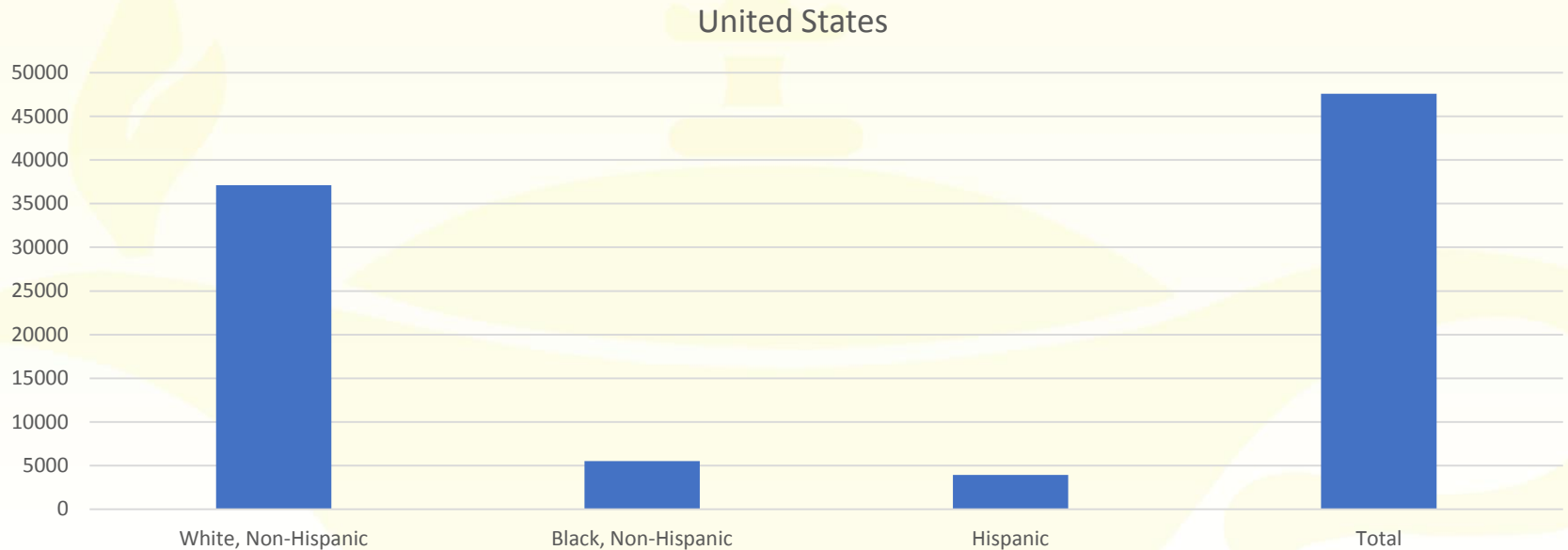


# 2017 WISCONSIN ACT 33

In addition, the Act provides that if an aided person is subject to criminal prosecution for a possession offense under the circumstances surrounding or leading to the aider's actions, the district attorney must offer the aided person a deferred prosecution agreement that includes the completion of a treatment program.



# Opioid Overdose Deaths by Race/Ethnicity 1999 - 2017



USA  
WI

37,113  
739

5,513 (15%)  
97 (13%)

3,932  
57

47,600  
926



# PO-PO POV

No arrests + No prosecution + Treatment  
=  
No accountability



# Group Activity

With police officers in the field and  
nurses in the field seeing no arrests + no  
prosecution + Only Treatment = no  
accountability...

What's the solution?



# Group Activity

Get into groups of convenience and come up with information you believe LEOs and RNs can share to alleviate the issue of no accountability on the side of the opioid abuser.



# Group Activity

1. What information can be transferred to the health care worker treating the abuser by LEOs?
2. What information can the RN pass onto LE officials to help combat the problem?
3. When do these information transfers occur?





# Group Activity

Take Five Minutes...



# Group Activity

We need three people to report their findings.



# Personal Safety Equipment

**Dust mask** to protect against aerosolized fentanyl inhalation.

**Nitrile, single-use examination gloves** to protect against skin exposure and transdermal transmission.

**Safety glasses** for additional protection from mucosal membrane absorption.

**Immediate washing** with soap and water of any exposed or contaminated skin.

**Remove and clean any uniform** clothing that might have been contaminated by fentanyl, blood or other potentially infectious material during patient assessment and care.



# Top Three Equipment Choices

1. **Dust mask**
2. **Nitrile, single-use examination gloves**
3. **Safety glasses**
4. **Immediate washing**
5. **Remove and clean any uniform**



# Group Activity

Questions



# Kenneth Harris, Jr., PhD

[contact@talentedstrategies.com](mailto:contact@talentedstrategies.com)

414-737-3939

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