

Peer Review

Review of: "Overdose Prevention Centers: Advancing Harm Reduction and the Right to Health in the United States"

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The authors present a compelling argument advocating for harm reduction as an essential public health strategy aimed at minimizing the negative consequences of substance use. They effectively highlight the evidence supporting harm reduction programs, including their role in reducing overdose deaths, preventing the spread of infectious diseases, and promoting engagement with treatment services.

While they argue these well, I think it's important that the authors also acknowledge the ongoing debate surrounding harm reduction, noting that some critics argue such programs may inadvertently encourage continued drug use or normalize risky behaviors. By recognizing these critiques while providing empirical evidence that challenges them, the authors offer a nuanced and balanced perspective. This acknowledgment will strengthen their argument by demonstrating that their advocacy for harm reduction is grounded not only in compassion or a human rights perspective but also in scientific rigor and an awareness of the broader policy discourse.

I hope this is helpful.

Yes, here is an example of a scholarly paper on the critics of harm reduction <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7679315/>.

What are some potential legal or policy challenges to expanding OPCs that the authors should address?

Some of the potential legal and policy challenges are outlined in one of my previously published papers, which emphasizes the importance of effective collaboration with law enforcement agencies in the implementation of harm reduction programs. While this may not directly reflect the situation in the U.S. context, the example illustrates how such partnerships can be critical in other settings where legal and policy barriers influence the success of harm reduction initiatives. (Here is the link to the paper: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368717154_It_Saved_My_Life_Three_Times_I_Could_Have_Died_Exploring_the_Perceptions_of_Peer-Administered_Naloxone_Program_in_Spain)

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.