



Over-The-Counter Naloxone Availability Within Rhode Island Retail Pharmacies

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Overview

The objective of this study was to assess the availability of OTC naloxone in RI retail pharmacies. The majority have OTC naloxone, however, there are significant differences in reported availability to customer callers in the core cities compared to other locations.

Background

- The Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) epidemic remains a significant health issue in the United States,
- There are high rates of opioid-related fatalities due to increased availability of illicit synthetic opiates
- The risk of developing an OUD is higher with synthetic opiate use, and the risk for overdose increases as wellse disorder, it was believed that the full conversion of naloxone from prescription to over-the-counter status would further increase its usage.
- On March 29, 2023 the FDA fully approved NARCAN[®] nasal spray as an over-the-counter product
- This study evaluates availability in retail pharmacies in Rhode Island, over 1 year after this conversion

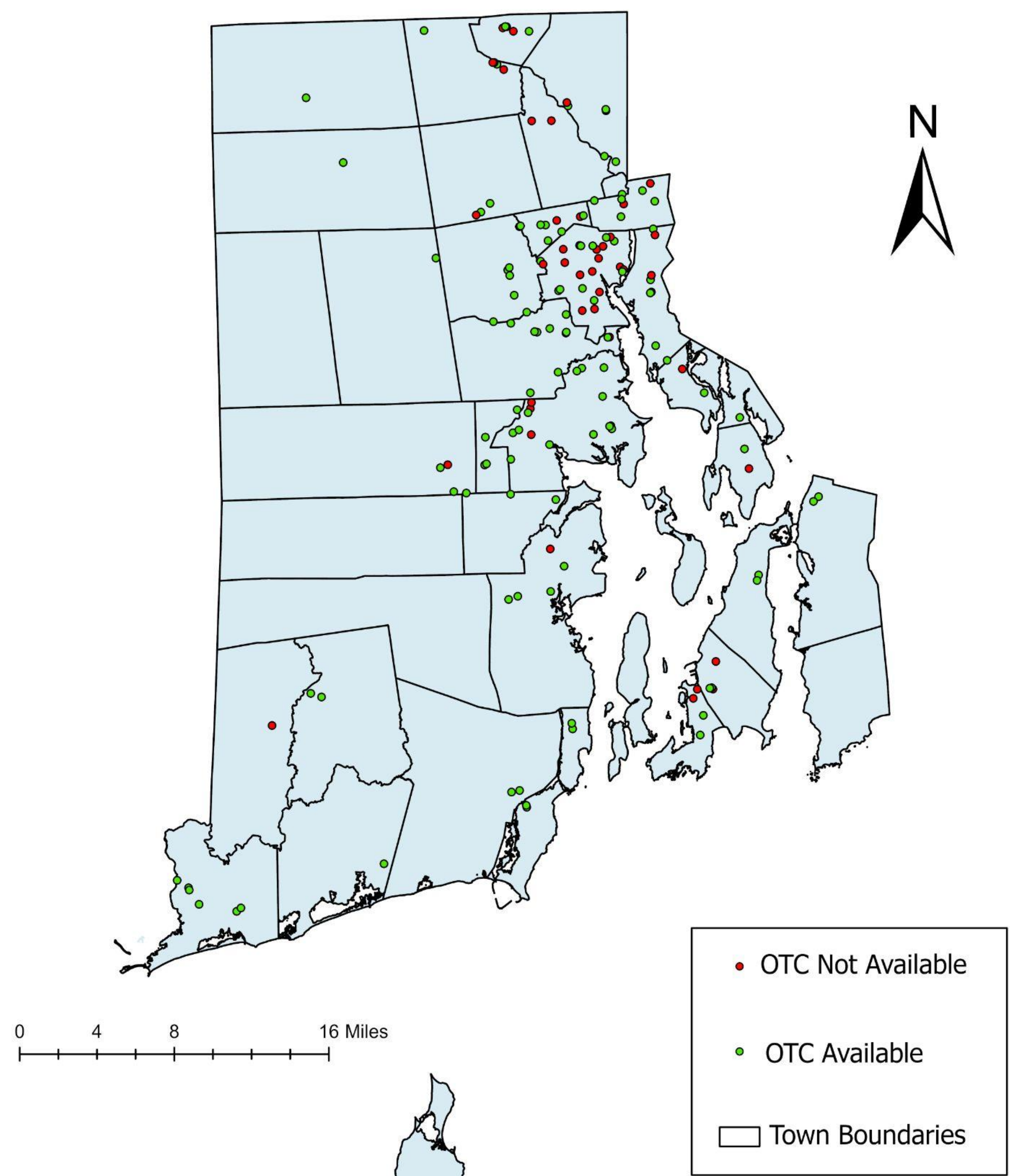
Study Design

- All 159 RI retail pharmacies open to the public were included in our study, these pharmacies were identified from the RIDOH website
- Only 157 of 159 pharmacies were able to be contacted
- A phone call was placed by a customer caller with pharmacy staff once per store to ask about naloxone availability. If pharmacy staff were unavailable, general staff were consulted.
- Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the number of pharmacies with same-day and OTC naloxone availability.
- Outcomes were compared by store type and location.

Results

Availability of OTC Naloxone in Rhode Island

This maps displays all 157 retail pharmacies that were surveyed.



- Map displays the pharmacies with over-the-counter naloxone versus without
- Our study found that a majority of (145 of 157, 92%) of Rhode Island retail pharmacies had naloxone in stock
- Of those pharmacies, 111 of 145 (76.6%) locations reported that naloxone was available OTC
- Only 19 of 38 (50%) pharmacies in the core cities had OTC naloxone, while 100 of 119 (84%) of other Rhode Island retail pharmacies had OTC naloxone

Conclusion

- Upon isolating the results from Rhode Island's core cities, a significant difference ($\chi^2 p < 0.001$) was noted in the availability of OTC naloxone at retail pharmacies. The core cities have high levels of child poverty and were determined to be Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, and Central Falls.
- Despite statewide efforts, more can be done to decrease the rate of opioid fatalities in Rhode Island

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