



In the United States, drug-related problems account for 17 million visits to the emergency department.¹ Studies show that 1/3rd are preventable.²

Overdose prevention centers (OPCs) (sometimes called safe consumption sites, safe injection sites or drug consumption rooms) are safe, monitored spaces where trained staff can intervene in the event of an overdose.



In OPCs, trained staff can use naloxone (an overdose reversal medication) and oxygen to reverse an overdose and save a life, without needing to call 911.



Scan for references



Visit opcinfo.org for more information.



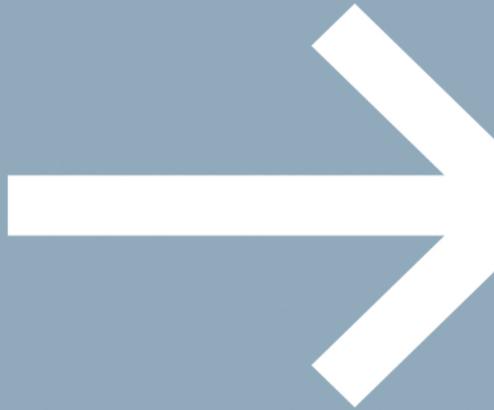
overdose prevention centers

A guide for EMS, Fire and Police.



Research shows OPCs can reduce the burden on emergency workers and first responders by reducing the amount of calls for an overdose in an area.

Here's how:



Decreased ambulance runs.

A study found that after an OPC opened in a neighborhood in Sydney, Australia, ambulance runs **significantly dropped** in that community.³ This means EMS is free to respond to other calls and there is a reduced burden on EMS to respond to overdoses.



A study looking at an unsanctioned OPC found that those who used an OPC had **54% fewer ED visits**.⁴

A study from France found similar effects - **a 59% decrease in ED visits** amongst those who visited the OPC.⁵

In New York City, OnPoint saw over 5,000 people within two months of opening. EMS responded a total of 5 times and **only 3 people** were transported to the ER.⁶

No increased arrest numbers.

Research has shown that overdose prevention centers do not increase drug-related arrests. They do not increase drug related activity.



Research analyzing arrest patterns around OnPoint NYC after opening have shown a decrease and/or no change in arrests, depending on the area studied.^{7,8} Studies from Vancouver and Sydney have shown no significant changes in crimes like assault.⁹

OPCs also reduce public drug use. In Vancouver, 12 weeks after opening - public drug use **dropped 50%** outside the site.¹⁰ Similar findings have been found in Copenhagen and Sydney.^{11,12}

Millions saved.

Cost effectiveness studies have found that OPCs would save cities millions of dollars.¹³ This is money that can then be used to fund other elements of emergency response.

One visit to the emergency department can cost approximately **\$3,450**.¹⁴ Every 911 call that is avoided through an overdose response within an OPC saves money and more importantly, continues to save lives.

It is crucial that emergency services work with overdose prevention centers to ensure that operations are smooth and coordinated, so that the OPC can help reduce the burden on emergency services and serve as a triage point for people seeking services in the area. Arbitrarily strict regulations may hamper the OPC's ability to do so - for instance, requiring a 911 response for every overdose that occurs at an OPC.¹⁵