Effectiveness of Extended-Release Naltrexone (XR-NTX) Among Criminal Justice-Involved Persons with Opioid Use Disorders

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Introduction. XR-NTX is increasingly considered as a therapeutic option for opioid use disorders in criminal justice settings despite limited evidence for its effectiveness in this population.

Methods. A 5-site open-label 24-week randomized effectiveness trial examined whether XR-NTX (6 monthly 380mg IM injections and Medical Management visits) reduced relapse compared with treatment-as-usual (TAU) among criminal justice-involved, opioid dependent participants. Assessments occurred every 2 weeks. The primary outcome of relapse was defined as 5 or more days of self-reported opioid use, or 2 or more self-reported days of opioid use plus a positive urine for opioids in a two week period (i.e. fortnight); missing urines were counted as positive.

Results. 308 subjects randomized to XR-NTX (n = 153) and TAU (n = 155) did not differ at baseline; 87% reported lifetime heroin use. 282 of 308 have completed the 24-week treatment phase to date. XR-NTX subjects vs. TAU were less likely to relapse at any point (13% vs. 32%, p < 0.0001), have a lower rate of relapse fortnights (5% vs. 16%, p < 0.0001), and a longer median time-to-relapse (6 vs. 3 fortnights, Hazard Ratio 0.36, p < 0.0002).

Conclusion. XR-NTX reduced opioid misuse among criminal justice-involved opioid dependent participants.