

# Be-SAFE: Responding to Opioid Overdose Victims Outside the Emergency Department

Christine Hassert, BSN, RN, TNCC, CEN  
XAVIER UNIVERSITY



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## BACKGROUND



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- In 2016 Ohio experienced a cluster of opioid overdoses, as many as 174 in a six day period.
- Accidental deaths from drug overdoses have increased upwards of 200% nationally since the year 2000.
- Many of these victims were arriving via private vehicles.
- Through the power of a question, a safe process was sought for this dilemma.
- What we found was no safe standard of practice for the safe removal of opioid overdose victims from a private vehicle outside of the emergency department.



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## PURPOSE

- The purpose of this project is to address scene safety when extricating an opioid overdose victim out of a private vehicle in the emergency department setting.
- The study aimed to successfully utilize the Be-SAFE process in the emergency department setting.
- Determine the efficacy of the Be-SAFE process through training, and evaluation via pre and post tests.
- Examine the interventional effect through statistical data.
- Specifically, the Be-SAFE process allows the responder to:
  1. Identify a potential opioid overdose
  2. Determine the risk factors associated with an opioid overdose
  3. Define the drug naloxone and understand how it works in the body
  4. Demonstrate the Be-SAFE process

## METHODS

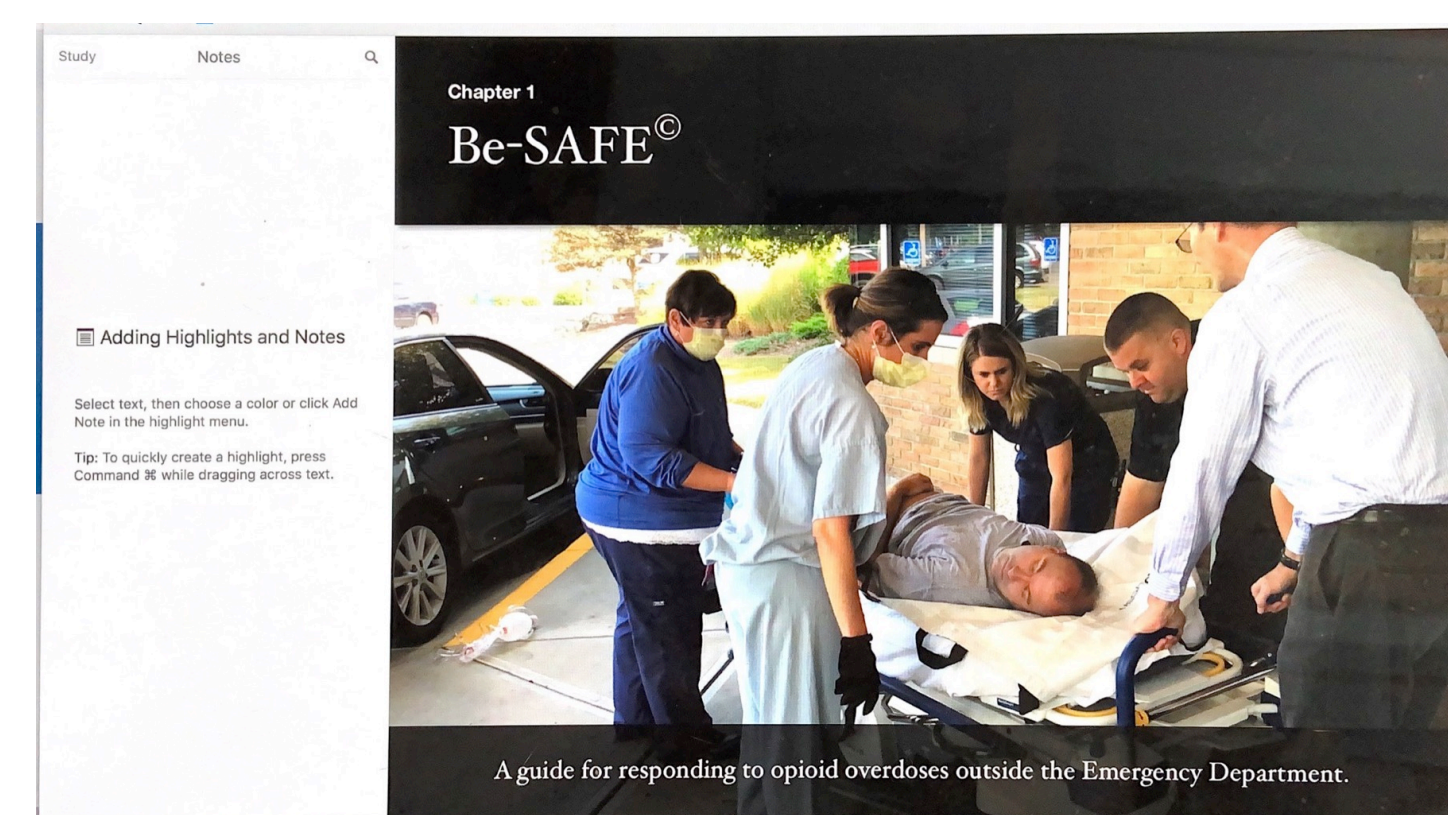
- With the assistance of a clinical educator, a resolution was presented to the Emergency Nurses Association to garner support for safer standards of care in this particular situation.
- A grant was awarded by the American Nurses Association (ANA) and Midwest Nursing Research, thus funding the development of an iBook.
- After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a research study was performed to determine the feasibility of the Be-SAFE process and results were disseminated in two scholarly journals currently in publication.
- The Be-SAFE process is available to all members of the ENA worldwide in the form of an infographic and iBook for future reference.
- A team approach utilizing law enforcement, ED technicians, and ED nurses was developed for optimal scene safety.

## FRAMEWORK

The framework of the Be-SAFE process entails four categories:

- Set the scene: scanning for scene safety, such as weapons in the vehicle, a running vehicle, or sharps seen on the victim.
- Asking about needles or other drugs and medications the victim may have ingested.
- Following the proper lift and transfer procedure as demonstrated in the iBook and hands on demonstration.
- Equipping yourself with the appropriate tools, such as needle resistant gloves, transfer device, and mask.

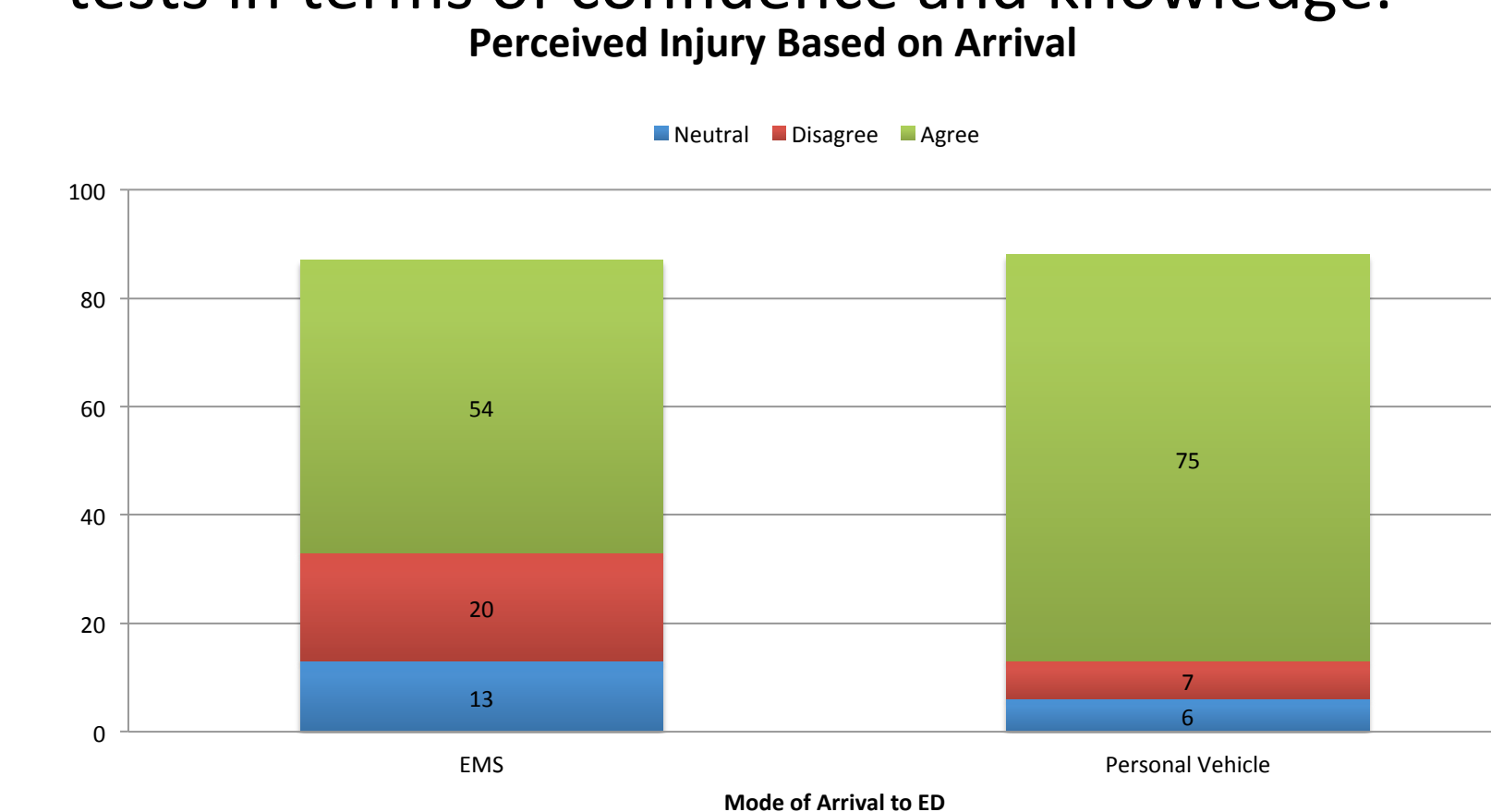
Be-SAFE iBook



Books.apple.com

## OUTCOMES

- Our research showed that ED staff felt significantly less safe responding to opioid overdose victims outside the ED as opposed to inside the ED on pre-tests.
- The same participants scored much higher on post-tests in terms of confidence and knowledge.



## RELEVANCE TO NURSING

- As opioid overdose deaths have continued to increase over the past several years here locally and also nationally, this delivers a strong concern to ED nursing personnel for his or her safety when extricating an unconscious victim from a private vehicle (Clark et al., 2020).
- It is the responsibility of the forensic nurse to recognize potential acts of violence, trauma, or abuse (Hammer et al., 2013).
- Using the Be-SAFE process, the forensic nurse is able to apply the recognition of potential signs of violence or abuse as noted above through *awareness* of the scene, while integrating the law enforcement personnel to reinforce the *safety* of the scene.

## CONCLUSIONS

- The team found an overall increase in the knowledge of the ED staff in terms of safely removing an opioid overdose victim from a private vehicle through this research after the utilization of the iBook and hands on demonstration (Clark et al., 2020).
- The team's agenda to improve the safety and efficacy of the safe extraction of an opioid overdose victim from a private vehicle was supported by the post-test analysis as evidenced  $p < 0.001$ , 95% CI (Clark et al., 2020).
- This research has been shared at local, regional, and national conferences, and submitted for consideration at the 2021 International Association of Forensic Nursing Conference.
- This research and process has been shared in two published scholarly journals.

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Pictured below left to right: Randy Johann, Christine Hassert, Rachel Baker, and Angie Clark. Not pictured: Jeannie Burnie.

