

Rethinking Harm Reduction in Hospitals

At a Glance

26% of hospital and ED visits involve drug-related issues

Rate of drug-related ED visits is 2,153 per 100,000

Common demographics are young, male, and Black

Most visits were for alcohol, opioids, and cannabis



Searching for Solutions

- Advancing hospital-based care via a **reduction of stigma**
- **SUD education** for healthcare providers
- **Partnering** with community-based harm reduction programs

Why Are Patients Leaving Against Medical Advice?

In a qualitative study of 16 patients who were admitted to a hospital for drug-related issues, four reasons for leaving AMA emerged.

Negative interactions with hospital staff

- Perceived judgment by healthcare providers, which led to receiving less care than what patient desired

Lack of pain management

- Healthcare providers were viewed as being reluctant to provide basic pain management due to stigma

Withdrawal and management of symptoms

- Patients had to manage withdrawal symptoms without medication

Restricted movement

- Movement around the hospital and grounds was limited, making the setting like a prison