

BROADCAST- Researchers developing mixed-reality training to combat opioid overdose deaths

ANCHOR LEDE: The U.S. Food and Drug administration in March approved sales of the opioid overdose antidote Narcan for over-the-counter sales after overdose deaths reached 105-thousand across the country last year. That's behind new efforts to create mixed reality training to prepare more people to step in and save a life.

VO or Wrap :44 SOC

Scott Barrows, who heads up the OSF Innovation Design Lab in Peoria, is working with researchers at Illinois State and Southern Illinois Universities to develop training that combines real-world nasal spray and mannikins or simulated ones with a virtual reality environment viewed in VR headsets. The team will get input from various demographic groups to make sure the training clicks with users.

(SOT-Scott Barrows)

"It has to be simple. It has to be easy to use. It has to be intuitive, but it also needs to be sensitive to the community experience whether it's rural, urban, suburban, no matter what age, so that's going to be the trick of the design process." (:20)

TAG: Once there's a prototype of this new VR training, it'll be tested by average citizens and experts for feedback and possible tweaks.

Version #2

Researcher Scott Barrows of OSF Innovation says mixed reality combines the real world with a virtual one.

"The mixed-reality portion of this being physical and virtual, will combine the actual spray device and a manikin so that people can practice the actual physical spraying with a manikin as well as having this virtual world that is valuable at the same time." (21)

TAG: Roy Ferguson, an assistant professor at Illinois State University who has designed music composition and orchestrating software will help design the new mixed-reality training.

Version #3

The head of the OSF Innovation Design Lab Scott Barrows believes the more immersive training will help people recall important best practices while in a high-stress, opioid overdose situation in real life.

“Providing as realistic a situation as possible, we think is more effective than certainly a classroom situation or watching a video or something that doesn’t really provide that as-close-to-reality experience that we think we’re doing.” (:18)

TAG: The second phase of research would seek additional funding for a randomized, controlled trial to determine if the mixed reality training is more effective than traditional approaches.