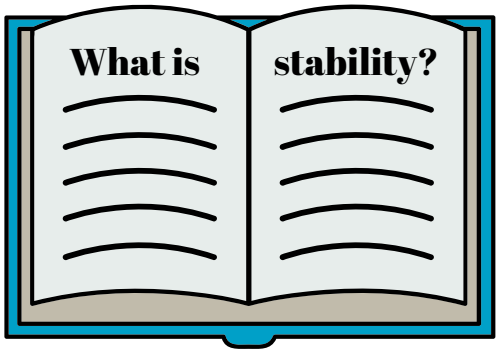
MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

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PROBLEMATIZING "PATIENT STABILITY" IN OUD CARE: FLEXIBLE DEFINITIONS, (IN)FLEXIBLE TREATMENT

Federal regulators have eased some restrictions on the provision of MOUD during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the regulations only go as far as providers are willing to apply these loosened regulations. Despite being listed by SAMHSA as the primary consideration when determining which patients should be offered methadone take-home doses, the definition of "stability" is not clear and has been assumed to mean abstinence from substances. Furthermore, other factors including a patient's employment, housing, financial situation, and co-occurring physical or mental health issues are taken account to determine "stability," leading to a very subjective definition. Patients may be offered different treatment options depending on where they receive care, or from whom. The process of identifying who is "stable" or "unstable" may, unintentionally, screen people out of programs before they are treated and further stigmatize patients. Re-examining the decision-making process of who should be screened out based on "stability" may be important as providers weigh the benefits of a low-barrier access to MOUD and the growing evidence-based literature base in providing easier access.

WHAT'S INSIDE

UPCOMING EVENTS

8/4: IN-PERSON Seminar: Best Practices in Overdose Prevention

8/5: ECHO: Managing Pain in the Patient with OUD

8/12: ECHO: Overcoming Addiction with Empathy

8/18: OBAT Navigator Skills Lab

8/24: MAT Lunch Hour: Topic TBD

8/26: IN-PERSON Forum: No More Dead Ends Towards Recovery

HEADLINES

Sex Differences in Weight Gain During MOUD

Telehealth and Pharmacy-Level Barriers to Buprenorphine in U.S.

Methadone Treatment for OUD Publication

MA/A Use Over Time Among OUD Treated with Buprenorphine/ Naloxone vs. Naltrexone

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS



IN-PERSON SEMINAR: BEST PRACTICES IN OVERDOSE PREVENTION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4TH FROM 9:00AM-3:30PM

Registration is now open for this seminar at the Hyatt in Princeton, NJ, discussing best practices in overdose prevention. Practices include the focus on the role of trauma-informed care, harm reduction, and medication-assisted treatment. COE speakers will be presenting. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

SUD MAT PROJECT ECHO: MANAGING PAIN IN THE PATIENT WITH OUD

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5TH FROM 12:00-1:00 PM

This MAT SUD session topic will discuss how to address and treat pain in the patient with opioid use disorder.

SUD CQI PROJECT ECHO: OVERCOMING ADDICTION WITH EMPATHY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12TH FROM 12:00-1:00 PM

This SUD continuous quality improvement session will discuss ways to address improving outcomes with OUD using empathy.

MAT LUNCH HOUR: TOPIC TBD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24TH FROM 12:00-1:00 PM

The MAT Lunch Hours are hour-long virtual meetings to hear from experts and discuss the latest in clinical and non-clinical issues affecting the MAT patient population.

OBAT NAVIGATOR MONTHLY RESOURCE CALLS & SKILLS LAB

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18TH FROM 12:00-1:00 PM

The Camden Coalition is offering monthly resources calls & skills labs to provide ongoing opportunity for OBAT navigators & other SUD navigators/case managers to continue learning through:

- Hour-long deep dive of particular content areas
- Discussion of (de-identified) patient cases & support thinking through patient engagement strategies, potential resources, & how to practice self-care while doing this work
- Presentations & sharing updated resources about relevant topics

These events take place every 3rd Thursday of the month from 12pm - 1pm

IN-PERSON FORUM: NO MORE DEAD ENDS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26TH FROM 9:00AM-2:00 PM

This is an in-person discussion forum exploring the opioid crisis from the perspective of various experts, providers, and other professionals.

RECENT NEWS

SEX DIFFERENCES IN WEIGHT GAIN DURING MEDICATION-BASED TREATMENT FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER



Side effects of MOUD such as weight gain may contribute to their stigma. There is substantial evidence suggesting that women experience more severe side effects than men do, and concerns about weight gain during treatment are prevalent. As the paper states, there are few studies reporting sex differences in weight gain during treatment and are generally restricted to methadone. Even much less is known about sex differences in weight gain due to buprenorphine. This systematic review and meta-analysis did not observe a sex-based disparity in weight gain with either methadone or buprenorphine treatment for OUD. Perhaps weight gain is due to other health issues, as patients in recovery may no longer be experiencing acute withdrawal which is linked to malnutrition.

'RED FLAGS' AND 'RED TAPE': TELEHEALTH AND PHARMACY-LEVEL BARRIERS TO BUPRENORPHINE IN THE UNITED STATES

This study sought to qualitatively assess how efforts to increase access to buprenorphine via telehealth are not only implemented by prescribers, but also experienced by patients. It conducted semi-structured interviews focused on telehealth for OUD treatment particularly with buprenorphine. It found that although the released regulations were welcome and appreciated, pharmacy-level barriers were still the rate-limiting step. One of the major "red flag" areas that persisted includin geographical distance form patient to provider or pharmacist, which often occur because tof the lack of treatment providers or pharmacies stocking buprenorphine. Continued efforts and policies that increase access to treatment for SUD will still be needed, but interventions to increase access to pharmacies would also be helpful.

RECENT LITERATURE



METHADONE TREATMENT FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER: IMPROVING ACCESS THROUGH REGULATORY AND LEGAL CHANGE: PROCEEDINGS OF A WORKSHOP

Methadone is a FDA approved medication for treating opioid use disorder. Despite its effectiveness in saving lives, there are many known many barriers to the initiation of and retention with methadone treatment for OUD. To address these barriers, on March 3 and 4, 2022, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine hosted a workshop on "Methadone Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Examining Federal Regulations and Laws," This publication summarizes the presentation and discussion of the workshop.

METHAMPHETAMINE/AMPHETAMINE USE OVER TIME AMONG PERSONS WITH OPIOID USE DISORDERS TREATED WITH BUPRENORPHINE/NALOXONE VERSUS EXTENDED-RELEASE NALTREXONE

Given that there are an increasing number of patients with OUD also using methamphetamine/amphetamine (MA/A), this study sought to describe their use among patients treated for OUD with buprenorphine/naloxone or extended-release naltrexone, and to explore associations between treatment arm and MA/A use. In this sample of 570 treated OUD patients, baseline use was observed in 18% of patients and there was no significant treatment effect, although those using buprenorphine had about half the odds of MA/A use compared to naltrexone. In conclusion, the study found that frequency of use did not decline over time and the odds slightly increased for each later visit. The secondary analyses found no significant difference in MA/A use between the BUP-NX and XR-NTX treatment arms

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge changes within our ranks. Dr. Erin Zerbo, the first Director of Northern NJ MAT COE, will be leaving Rutgers University in August. Dr. Zerbo is the founding Medical Director of the CARE Center, our low-barrier outpatient practice dedicated to underserved Newark residents. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and the Associate Director of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry. Her primary interest is the treatment of SUD in populations with significant deficits in their social determinants of health. She has authored and edited several books and journal publications on the topic of addiction treatment including, "Pocket Guide to Addiction Assessment and Treatment" (APA, 2016), and "Becoming Mindful: Integrating Mindfulness into Your Psychiatric Practice" (APA, 2017). Dr. Zerbo will truly be missed on our team and has inspired, motivated, and offered so much knowledge to everyone around her during her time at Rutgers.



In the interim, the new Medical Director of the Northern NJ MAT COE will be Dr. Petros Levounis. Dr. Levounis serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry, and Associate Dean for Professional Development at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. He is also the President Elect of the American Psychiatric Association. Dr. Levounis has been practicing, teaching, and writing in the field of addiction psychiatry for over 20 years. He has published 14 books, lectured on addiction topics throughout the United States and abroad, and has been interviewed by major news networks and publications. We welcome his expertise as he steps into this new role.