

Expanding Access to Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Provider Perspectives on Reducing Barriers to Evidence-Based Care

National Press Club
529 14th St NW, Washington, DC 20045
September 20, 2018

Workshop Discussion Guide

Introduction

Supporting the development, access, and adoption of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder (OUD) is a key priority of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as part of its response to the opioid crisis. Despite the significant potential for treatment to reduce opioid-related morbidity and mortality for millions of Americans suffering from OUD, many Americans still lack access to quality, evidence-based treatment. This workshop, held by the Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy under a cooperative agreement with the FDA, will serve as a forum for providers, clinical experts, and other stakeholders within the health care system to come together to learn from current innovative models for treatment of OUD, identify barriers to OUD treatment, and discuss opportunities to further reduce stigma and expand access to effective OUD pharmacotherapies. Discussion topics will include the treatment armamentarium for OUD, examining barriers to access, and defining successful treatment outcomes that might help facilitate alternative payment models (APMs) and improved quality of care. This workshop will encourage audience participation and active engagement as a means of gaining insight into how stakeholders can overcome barriers to access for medications for treatment of OUD. The following sections outline key discussion questions for workshop sessions.

Polling Question for Audience (*live audience and webcast participants will be invited to respond to polling questions via the web link provided*):

- 1) Which statement best describes you?
 - a) I am a healthcare provider
 - b) I am a professional who offers counseling or behavioral health services
 - c) I am a peer recovery support specialist or recovery advocate
 - d) I am a patient, caregiver, or advocate for people with OUD
 - e) I am part of an organization interested in OUD treatment (government, community organizations, healthcare organizations, payers, and so forth)
 - f) Other

Session I – Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Exploring Effective Approaches and Models of Care

Screening, intervention, treatment, and support for recovery from OUD may occur in a variety of community and healthcare settings. Depending on the severity of symptoms and patient needs, these settings may include acute inpatient or emergency care settings, inpatient or residential treatment, case management, outpatient treatment and counseling, and community and peer recovery supports. However, the majority of medications for OUD are delivered in primary care settings.¹ This session will feature experts currently leading innovative models of care and effective approaches for improving OUD

screening, intervention, and treatment. Discussion will focus on identifying lessons learned from implementation, and how effective approaches may be more broadly scaled and applied in a variety of settings.

Presentations in this session will cover the following topics:

- Addressing the needs of patients with co-occurring disorders
- Advancing team-based approaches and care models
- System-wide approaches for improving provider education and engagement with OUD treatment
- Interventions in emergency care settings and improving transitions to appropriate levels of care

Polling Question for Audience:

- 2) What is the biggest challenge for health systems and/or providers that would like to implement a coordinated approach to OUD treatment?
 - a) Need for additional evidence on which models work
 - b) Need for additional funding resources
 - c) Need for additional training or education
 - d) Need for additional institutional support
 - e) Need for legal or regulatory changes
 - f) Other

Moderated Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are some models of care being implemented today that have shown promising results for treatment of OUD and might be replicated on a greater scale?
- 2) How can the process of screening, intervention, and referral be improved to enable better patient transitions through appropriate levels of care?
- 3) How can OUD treatment approaches better integrate coordinated care for patients with chronic pain, co-occurring psychiatric disorders, and other co-morbidities?
- 4) What are some of the most significant challenges associated with broader implementation of innovative approaches and models for OUD care? What challenges can be most easily addressed?
- 5) How can government policymakers help promote better access to evidence based treatment?

Session II – Examining Barriers to Access for Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

This session will focus on legal, regulatory, and practical barriers to greater health system utilization of medications for OUD treatment, which ultimately lead to reduced patient access to these effective medications. This discussion will feature provider and patient perspectives on current challenges and potential opportunities to reduce stigma and expand access to effective treatment.

Presentations in this session will cover the following topics:

- Overview of major legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers to access
- The role of stigma in limiting access to treatment
- Patient perspectives and difficulties in navigating the treatment system
- Addressing gaps in the behavioral health workforce and payment policy

Polling Question for Audience:

- 3) For policymakers and health systems, what is the most significant opportunity to expand access to medications for OUD?
 - a) Expanding efforts to address stigma
 - b) Addressing legal or regulatory barriers
 - c) Examining coverage and payment policies of OUD treatment
 - d) Investment in new models or technologies for OUD care that can help meet patient needs (e.g. expanding (e.g. telehealth to reach rural populations)
 - e) New resources or funding
 - f) Other

Moderated Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are the most significant barriers faced by providers and health systems seeking to provide medications for OUD?
- 2) What are the most significant actions that policymakers, regulators, drug manufacturers, payers, and healthcare leaders can take to alleviate current barriers to access?
- 3) How does the problem of stigma affect provider willingness to provide medications for OUD? How does it affect patient access or willingness to access treatment? How can the provider community and policy leaders meaningfully reduce the stigma associated with treatment?
- 4) How can advances in drug development, such as the development of new medications or formulations, help reduce barriers to access? What specific advancements would be most meaningful or impactful for OUD treatment delivery?
- 5) How can policymakers and regulators encourage telehealth and other innovative care delivery approaches that can address barriers to patient access for rural and other medically-underserved populations?

Session III – Barriers and Opportunities to Expand Treatment for Vulnerable Populations

Existing barriers to treatment and access to effective medications for OUD may be particularly acute for vulnerable and medically-underserved populations. These populations may be disproportionately affected by the opioid epidemic or face additional barriers related to culture, age, gender, access to healthcare resources, involvement in the criminal justice system, or stigma. Despite these challenges, innovative and effective care models have been developed to address the unique challenges and needs of these populations. This session will focus on care models and approaches for delivering effective treatment to adolescents, pregnant women, American Indian and Alaska Native populations, and those involved in the criminal justice system. Discussion will also focus on how current legal, regulatory, and practical barriers to treatment may be addressed by policymakers, regulators, and healthcare practitioners.

Polling Questions for Audience:

- 4) Recognizing that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to OUD care delivery, what is the highest priority issue that must be addressed first to improve evidence-based OUD treatment for vulnerable populations?
 - a) Resources for delivering culturally-appropriate care

- b) Development of models or standards of care
- c) Improving care coordination or transitions to care
- d) Trust between communities and healthcare or government organizations
- e) Patient reluctance to seek or engage in care
- f) Other

Moderated Discussion Questions:

- 1) How can health systems improve approaches to culturally-competent or non-stigmatizing care? What are important principles for building trust and relationships within communities?
- 2) Many vulnerable or underserved populations face complex physical and behavioral health needs and challenges. How can patient care be better coordinated across behavioral and physical health?
- 3) How is treatment for OUD being delivered within the criminal justice system today? What are effective approaches for using medications to treat incarcerated populations?
- 4) How can we best address systemic challenges to treatment for vulnerable populations who often shift between systems (e.g., criminal justice, social services)? How can transitions be better facilitated to enable effective care?
- 5) What are barriers to scaling effective models of care? How can these barriers be addressed by policymakers, regulators, and health systems?

Session IV – Future Directions for Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Defining Success and Identifying Outcomes that Matter

Current approaches to evaluating the efficacy of OUD treatment have traditionally used reductions in drug-taking behavior (drug use patterns) as an endpoint. Yet, meaningful outcomes for patients in OUD treatment can also include outcomes such as reduced patient symptoms (e.g., cravings), reduced mortality or other adverse health outcomes, reduced need for medical intervention, improved social functioning, and other measures. As the health system increasingly moves away from fee-for-service approaches and toward APMs that align payment with measures of quality, establishing consensus quality measures for OUD treatment will be essential. This session will feature clinical, health system, and economic perspectives on defining “success” in OUD treatment, and will discuss how better defining these measures may facilitate quality improvement, innovative payment approaches, and access to effective care.

Polling Questions for Audience:

- 5) What patient treatment outcome might be considered the most meaningful for OUD treatment?
 - a) Continued abstinence
 - b) Decreased illicit substance use
 - c) Reduction in patient symptoms
 - d) Patient functionality and well-being (e.g., ability to hold a job, social functioning, avoiding criminal activity)
 - e) Reduction in harmful health outcomes (e.g., transmission of infectious diseases, emergency department admissions, mortality)
 - f) Other

Moderated Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are some approaches being used today to establish quality measures for OUD treatment?
- 2) What are some of the challenges associated with implementing quality measures across delivery systems? What are some meaningful measures of systemic progress?
- 3) How do we ensure that patient preferences and the preferences of the patient's support system are incorporated into quality and performance measures?
- 4) How might the introduction of APMs facilitate quality improvement and address some of the identified barriers to coverage of OUD treatment? What are some key principles that APMs for OUD treatment must address?
- 5) What are barriers to further adoption of APMs that might better align payment with value produced for patients?

Funding for this workshop was made possible in part by a cooperative agreement with the Food and Drug Administration, Center for Drug Evaluation Research. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsements by the U.S. Government.

¹ Chou R, Korthuis PT, Weiner M, et al. (2016). Medication-Assisted Treatment Models of Care for Opioid Use Disorder in Primary Care Settings. *Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK402352/>