

Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder Guideline Checklist

Clinician Level 2



The current state of the issue

Opioid-related deaths continue to be alarmingly high despite the availability of effective medication treatment. Among those under 50 years of age, drug overdose is the second leading cause of death, increasing 12% in 2024 to exceed 71,000 lives.¹ Highly potent synthetic opioids, most commonly fentanyl, are now the majority of the drug supply. Washington state death rates due to fentanyl have risen over 750% between 2018-2022, and in 2022 were almost 90% of all opioid-involved deaths.² Opioid use disorder is a chronic condition and must be managed as such. Medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD), including buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone, are the most appropriate, evidence-based treatment in addition to harm reduction.³

Treatment

- Offer medications for opioid use disorder treatment, including in primary care.
- Follow evidence-based guidelines for assessment of opioid withdrawal and MOUD initiation.
- If a patient does not choose to use MOUD, continue to offer medications at follow-up visits.
- If unable to offer MOUD within your clinic, find someone in your system or external to your system that can prescribe MOUD.
- Prescribe dosages of MOUD and adjunct therapies that adequately address symptoms.
- Prescribe MOUD for duration adequate to treat OUD as a chronic condition (e.g., 30 days instead of 2 weeks). There is no limit on how long an individual may use any MOUD.

Management

- In primary care, coordinate care across physical and behavioral health providers. Optimal treatment for SUD in primary care involves the integration of physical and behavioral health.
- Use telehealth in care for patients with OUD, including for providing MOUD.

Resources

- The Bree Report is meant to supplement these resources.
- Full Bree Report: <https://www.qualityhealth.org/bree/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2024/12/Bree-OUD-Treatment-Report-24-HCA-1203.pdf>
- Washington State Standing Order to Dispense Naloxone HCl: https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/Documents/Pubs/150-127_StatewideStandingOrderToDispenseNaloxone.pdf
- Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) locator: <https://search.warecoveryhelpline.org>

Connect with the Bree Collaborative at bree@qualityhealth.org

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). Understanding the opioid overdose epidemic. Retrieved September 16, 2024, from <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html> 2. Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute. (2024). Heroin versus fentanyl: What does the data say? University of Washington. Retrieved September 16, 2024, from https://adai.washington.edu/WAdata/heroin_versus_fentanyl.htm 3. Learn About Treatment. (n.d.). Medications for opioid use disorder. Retrieved September 16, 2024, from <https://www.learnabouttreatment.org/treatment/medications-for-opioid-use-disorder/>