



Buprenorphine Initiative in the VA

BIV: Improving Implementation and Outcomes of Office-Based Treatment of Opioid Dependence in the VA
VA Compiled and hosted by the VISN 4 MIRECC.

A Tool for Buprenorphine Care

(A series of monthly newsletters about buprenorphine treatment)

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RECENT NATIONAL ATTENTION

Last month's issue highlighted the national media attention towards opioid abuse. Since then, numerous stories of illegal distribution, addiction, and overdose specific to opioids have continued to appear. The stories seemingly cover all types of opioid substances, demographics, and situations. Overall, they point to an increase in opioid abuse and related death.

In the Pittsburgh area, two separate cases involved McDonald's employees. In one case, the employee fulfilled heroin deliveries in Happy Meals via the drive-thru window. While the circumstances are easy fodder for humor and incredulosity, our field understands this behavior in the context of addiction.

Also in Western Pennsylvania, as well as Maryland, a spike in heroin overdoses occurred. Twenty-two cases were linked to heroin that had been mixed with fentanyl. NPR carried two stories.

Prompted by the death of actor Philip Seymour Hoffman, The Wall Street Journal reported on the international trend in increased use and deaths, noting statistics from SAMSHA and the CDC. A search for heroin yielded many recent articles.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Do you have a specific question or general topic that you'd like to see covered in this space? Please email John.HardingJr@va.gov to have your idea considered for next month's publication.

BIV'S MONTHLY WEBINAR SERIES

The BIV's monthly webinar series continues on Tuesday, March 11th at 1:00pm EST. The topic will be *Expert Roundtable: Q&A*. The webinar will be held in Lync online meeting and VANTS conference call formats. The slides used in the presentation will be made available after the call for those that are not able to connect via Lync. Look for a Microsoft Outlook calendar invite which will invite you to the webinar. (Past in-services, webinars, and presentations are available [here](#).)

Additionally, your comments, suggestions and questions are welcome and time will be set aside during the presentation to address them. The topic list will be finalized in an ongoing fashion and submitted questions will be addressed during each webinar. Please submit to John.HardingJr@va.gov.

MEDICATION-ASSISTED ADDICTION TREATMENT IN THE NEWS

1. Fighting Addiction With A Pill Has Potential For Abuse, Officials Say
2. BEMA Buprenorphine Effective for Chronic Pain in Trials

RESEARCH UPDATE

1. Cleve Clin J Med. 2013 Jun;80(6):345-9. Medication-assisted treatment of opiate dependence is gaining favor. Jerry JM, Collins GB. TAKE HOME POINT: "Data from decades of experience with MAT strongly support the conclusion that it is superior to abstinence-based approaches."
2. Implement Sci. 2013 May 10;8:50. Testing use of payers to facilitate evidence-based practice adoption: protocol for a cluster-randomized trial. Molfenter T, Kim JS, Quanbeck A, Patel-Porter T, Starr S, McCarty D. TAKE HOME POINT: This study aims to offer an approach "by aligning purchasing and regulatory policies at the payer level with organizational change strategies at the organizational level."

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