



Buprenorphine Initiative in the VA

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

## A Tool for Buprenorphine Care

(A series of monthly newsletters about buprenorphine treatment)

Volume 7, Issue 3 — November 2013

### RECENT NATIONAL ATTENTION

Three recent newspaper articles brought national attention to buprenorphine's role in addiction treatment. On November 17, *The New York Times* published a front-page article with the first of a two-part series entitled "The Double-Edged Drug". The first installment ([Addiction Treatment With a Dark Side – In Demand in Clinics and on the Street, 'Bupe' Can Be a Savior or a Menace](#)) focused on buprenorphine education for the layperson. The article presented a history of buprenorphine up to the present-day difficulties inherent in addictions, treatment, patients, and prescribers. Multiple perspectives were explored through the lenses of individual circumstances. Positive and negative points of view came from a variety of involved parties.

The next day, *The Times* followed with [At Clinics, Tumultuous Lives and Turbulent Care](#). This article offered an in-depth exploration of two clinics which are geographically close, but philosophically different. The perspectives of two groups of patients and their providers are extremely enlightening.

*The Washington Post* responded on November 23 with [This Drug Could Make A Huge Dent In Heroin Addiction. So why isn't it used more?](#) An addiction researcher gave a short overview of buprenorphine care and a long interview with Dr. Peter Friedmann, an addiction physician with strong leadership credentials in the field. The interview reads more like a conversation and includes detailed descriptions of how buprenorphine works, their take on the complex difficulties in addiction treatment, and their reaction to *The Times'* articles.

### BIV'S MONTHLY WEBINAR SERIES

The BIV's monthly webinar series continues on Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm EST. *Induction* will be the topic. As with December's first installment, the webinar will be held in Lync online meeting and VANTS conference call formats. Additionally, the slides used in the presentation will be made available ahead of the call for those that are not able to connect via Lync. Look for a Microsoft Outlook calendar invite soon which will invite you to the webinar.

December's slides are available (along with other past in-services, webinars, and presentations) [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](mailto:John.HardingJr@va.gov).

### MEDICATION-ASSISTED ADDICTION TREATMENT IN THE NEWS

1. [Feds Raid Reckitt Benckiser Offices; Criminal Probe Underway](#)
2. [French Watchdog Fines Merck, Reckitt in Subutex Generics Dispute](#)

### RESEARCH UPDATE

1. Appl Psychophysiol Biofeedback. 2013 Jun;38(2):133-41. [Neurofeedback training for opiate addiction: improvement of mental health and craving.](#) Dehghani-Arani F, Rostami R, Nadali H. TAKE HOME POINT: "The study supports the effectiveness of neurofeedback training as a therapeutic method in opiate dependence disorder, in supplement to pharmacotherapy."
2. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2012 Dec 14;61(49):997-1001. [Buprenorphine prescribing practices and exposures reported to a poison center--Utah, 2002-2011.](#) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). TAKE HOME POINT: "However, comparison of the ratios of buprenorphine exposures to patients and prescribers in 2002 with data for 2011 indicated substantial decreases from 6/22 for patients and 6/16 for prescribers in 2002 to 81/9,793 for patients and 81/1,088 for prescribers in 2011."

BIV: Improving Implementation and Outcomes of Office-Based Treatment of Opioid Dependence in the VA



This information is supported and provided by the Substance Use Disorder Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (SUD-QUERI), Center of Excellence in Substance Abuse Treatment and Education (CESATE), the Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers (MIRECC), and the Program Evaluation and Resource Center (PERC) within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please contact Dan Harding at [John.HardingJr@va.gov](mailto:John.HardingJr@va.gov) or 412-954-5207 with questions or comments.