ANNOUNCING BIV’S MONTHLY WEBINAR SERIES

As the utilization of medications for the treatment of opioid use disorders increases, programs such as the Buprenorphine Initiative in the VA (BIV) fill the need for education, dissemination of current events, and creation of a community that are experts in a newly emerging field. The BIV has helped with the formation of new treatment sites, the expansion of knowledge in this growing area, and the transmission of newsworthy topics that are relevant to regular practice. The BIV will continue these responsibilities with the formation of a monthly webinar series. You are cordially invited to join other prominent members of the medication-assisted opioid treatment community for topics that may impact your daily interactions. Topics will include items such as buprenorphine history, formulary options, latest regulations, dealing with pain, and tapering off of medications. This month’s topic will be A History of Buprenorphine Care in the VA.

The first webinar will be on Tues, Dec 10 at 1:00pm EST and it will be held in Lync online meeting and conference call formats. This newsletter’s subscription list will be invited via Microsoft Outlook email. In the event that you are not able to join the slide presentation, a reference copy will be attached for attendees who RSVP. The conference call will be held via the VANTS conference call system and will be available to anyone who wishes to join.

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.

DSM-5 CHANGES

The updated Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders includes changes that are directly pertinent to opioid agonist therapy. The DSV-IV listed separate disorders for substance abuse and substance dependence. The DSM-5 removes these separate disorders and places them under the shared diagnosis of “Opiate Use Disorder”. The diagnosis is intended to cover all types of opioid use and is to be specified for the opioid substance of choice (e.g., Heroin Use Disorder). The criteria lists for the separate disorders have been combined and updated. A drug craving criteria has been added and the criteria for difficulty with law enforcement has been removed. The single diagnosis will indicate a severity of either mild, moderate, or severe and will disrupt confusion that was caused by the separate dependence diagnosis. The authors indicate that the single diagnosis “will better match the symptoms that patients experience.”

MEDICATION-ASSISTED ADDICTION TREATMENT IN THE NEWS

1. Buprenorphine Works in Initial Opioid Detox
2. Is Suboxone a Wonder Drug that Helps Heroin Addicts Get Clean--Or Just Another Way to Stay High?

RESEARCH UPDATE