Case Study

Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Education



The Problem

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), overdose deaths from opioids have increased over six times since 1999. Despite these numbers, access to effective treatment for individuals with opioid use disorder has continued to lag behind the need.

A significant barrier to successful treatment for opioid use disorder is the limited supply of clinicians willing to prescribe buprenorphine. Buprenorphine is a partial opioid agonist that reduces cravings, withdrawal symptoms, use of illicit opioids and risk of overdose. Buprenorphine does not produce a euphoric effect and is an effective, appropriate medical treatment for opioid use disorder.

Many clinicians become certified for buprenorphine prescribing but never offer Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) to their patients. Barriers include administrative, infrastructure, policy and reimbursement concerns. Low provider uptake of buprenorphine has left many patients with opioid use disorder (OUD) without access to an effective and life-saving treatment.

Comagine Health conducted interviews with clinicians in Utah identifying several structural and cultural barriers related to MOUD implementation. One of the barriers is difficulty finding resources to create a program tailored to their care setting.

The Solution

The Utah Department of Health turned to Comagine Health for a solution. We launched an MOUD Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) in Utah. The goal of the MOUD ECHO was to provide information to clinicians and clinic managers on how to effectively implement a MOUD program within their practice and safely and efficiently treat patients with OUD using MOUD.

The six session ECHO was conducted in May 2020 and again in November 2020. The MOUD ECHO training provided opportunities for participants to receive information from and interact with subject matter experts on MOUD implementation.

> **"I learned a lot and will be using many pieces of information in our practice."**

The Results

Comagine Health conducted an evaluation of the MOUD ECHO training. Participants received a pre-training survey, a post-training survey and a 3-month follow-up survey to assess participant and clinic readiness to prescribe buprenorphine, clinic policies and procedures to support MOUD implementation and training satisfaction.

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The Results cont.

The major findings from the training are:

- After participating in the training, participants felt better equipped to identify patients appropriate for treatment and have a plan for referring patients they could not serve.
- Participants were more likely to agree after the training that they had the tools to put procedures in place for OUD treatment and understood how to bill for OUD treatment.
- Twice as many participants had policies and procedures in place for buprenorphine induction, stabilization and maintenance and for what to do when patients deviate from their treatment plan.
- Participants were highly satisfied with the training and almost all indicated that they would participate again.

"This training has been organized and offered some of the most valuable information I can use in my interactions with my patients."

The MOUD ECHO offered much needed tools and guidance to identify patients and implement protocols and policies, increasing provider readiness to treat and to support patients in living healthy and fulfilling lives.

About Comagine Health

Comagine Health is a national, nonprofit, health care consulting firm. We work collaboratively with patients, providers, payers and other stakeholders to reimagine, redesign and implement sustainable improvements in the health care system.

As a trusted, neutral party, we work in our communities to address key, complex health and health care delivery problems. In all our engagements and initiatives, we draw upon our expertise in quality improvement, care management, health information technology, analytics and research.

We invite our partners and communities to work with us to improve health and redesign the health care delivery system.

Contact Us

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