An Overview of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

Tina Braham, Director of Special Projects & Initiatives
MISSION:
To help those who are suffering from substance use disorders. We consider these people our patients, and our singular aim is to help them heal. We’re proud that our clinics provide our patients an environment that is free of judgment and condescension and we’re steadfast in treating everyone with the utmost dignity and respect.

VISION:
Leading the change to eliminate the consequences of substance use disorder in our communities.

VALUES:
• We listen to and honor the reality of those we serve.
• We are evangelists for practices grounded in science and evidence.
• We value people who are passionate about making an impact.
• We see challenges as opportunities to demonstrate initiative.
THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

• Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the US
• 2-6 million Americans fit the definition for an Opioid Use Disorder
• Only 20% seek treatment

(Centers for Disease Control; National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2017; Charumilind, 2018; Kaiser Family Foundation)
Prescription drug overdoses is now the leading cause of accidental death in the US. 
~115 people die everyday from an overdose 
3 out of 10 heroin users will be dead at 10 years 
2.2m Children affected, projected to increase to 4.3m 
OD kills 2% of people with OUD per year 
$13B Annual Cost to Hospitals 

The US consumes 80% of the world’s global opiate supply but is only 5% of the world’s population. 
91% of patients who overdose will receive another prescription for the same opiate that they overdosed on. 
4 out of 5 people with an OUD started with an OPR (20% start with a script) 
8-12% of those prescribed an OPR will develop an OUD 

95.5% of active drug users don’t acknowledge that they need help 
1 in 20 Americans are long-term users of OPRs 
34% of Long-term users say they are addicted to their OPRs 
80% of Individuals with OUD had co-occurring SUD 
People with OUD tend to wait 4-7 years after developing OUD before starting treatment 

There are 2.4 million untreated opioid dependent individuals in the US (possibly as high 4-6m). 
11–26% of people with OUD receive treatment, and among those who do, 34% receive MAT 
50% of people are still in treatment after 1 year
What is Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

- MAT is primarily used for treating Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and involves the use of medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies.
- The prescribed medications work to normalize reestablish the brain chemistry and block the euphoric effect of the opioids, relieve cravings, normalize body functions, and help with the withdraws.
How MAT Medications Work in The Brain
### Table 1
**FDA-Approved Drugs Used in MAT\(^2\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Mechanism of action</th>
<th>Route of administration</th>
<th>Dosing frequency</th>
<th>Available through</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methadone</td>
<td>Full agonist</td>
<td>Available in pill, liquid, and wafer forms</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Opioid treatment program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buprenorphine</td>
<td>Partial agonist</td>
<td>Pill or film (placed inside the cheek or under the tongue)</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Any prescriber with the appropriate waiver</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Implant (inserted beneath the skin)</td>
<td>Every six months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naltrexone</td>
<td>Antagonist</td>
<td>Oral formulations</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Any health care provider with prescribing authority</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extended-release injectable formulation</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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</table>

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**Definition of Medication-Assisted Treatment**
Withdrawals vs Cravings

**Start**
Take your last dose

**72 Hours**
Physical symptoms at peak
- Chills, fever, body aches, diarrhea, insomnia, muscle pain, nausea, dilated pupils

**1 Week**
Physical symptoms start to lessen
- Tiredness, sweating, body aches, anxiety, irritability, nausea

**2 Week**
Psychological and emotional symptoms
- Depression, anxiety, irritability, restlessness, trouble sleeping

**1 Month**
Cravings and depression
- Symptoms can linger for weeks or months

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Which of the 3 FDA Approved Medications is Best?

Conclusion:
The best medication is the one that works for the patients. Thus, no one medication is best.

But research confirms that more people respond to methadone than buprenorphine and more people respond to buprenorphine than to naltrexone.
MAT EFFECTIVENESS

Medication with behavioral therapies has been shown to be more effective than treatment with behavioral therapies alone by:

- Easing withdrawal symptoms
- Reducing cravings
- And/or blocking the effects of opioids

(Bart, 2012)
Benefits of MAT

- Programs are clinically based and focus on meeting the unique needs of every individual
- Reduction in drug-related deaths
- Reduction in IV drug use
- Reduction of HIV/AIDS/ HepC
- Reduction in drug-related crimes
- Improved family stability
- Improved pregnancy outcomes
- 5-20% rate of continued opioid use
  - Compared to 60-90% continued use with abstinence-based treatment
MAT HEALTHCARE SAVINGS

• Every $1 invested in addiction treatment yields a $12 savings in overall societal costs

• Participating in MAT is associated with a 17% decline in expected emergency department use

• 50% reduction in healthcare costs for those utilizing MAT services

(National Institute on Drug Abuse; Schwarz, et al., 2012; McCarty, Dennis et al., 2010)
MAT: Myths and Misconceptions

• Trading one addiction for another
• Is not true recovery
• Increases risk of overdose
• Only should be used short-term
• MAT programs attract crime and attract individuals who use drugs to the neighborhoods
• The prescribed medications cause impairment so individuals cannot drive, effectively parent, work
• Everyone gets “high” off of methadone and/or buprenorphine
• Too expensive
Stigma Reduction

• No more labels
• Use “person first” language
• Addiction as a disease not a moral failure
• Drug use falls along a continuum, ranging from abstinence to chronic dependence and everything in between
• Any positive change
## Strategies to Tackle the Epidemic

### Cascade of Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention</th>
<th>Screening &amp; Diagnosis</th>
<th>Engagement in Treatment</th>
<th>Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Initiative</th>
<th>Retention in Care</th>
<th>Sustained Recovery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naloxone Distribution</td>
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<td>Public Education</td>
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<td>Clinician Education</td>
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<td>Prescription Drug Monitoring Program</td>
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<td>Community-Based Universal Prevention Programs</td>
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<td>Embed Screening for Opioid Misuse</td>
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<td>Effective Referral-to-Treatment Strategies</td>
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<td>Effective Motivational Enhancement Strategies</td>
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<td>Drug Treatment for Pregnant Women</td>
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<td>Telehealth Options</td>
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<td>Treatment Finder Resources</td>
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<td>Initiate MAT in Various Settings, Including Criminal Justice Settings</td>
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<td>Patient-Centered &amp; Tailored Approaches</td>
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<td>Integration of Social Support Services</td>
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<td>Access to Long-Acting MAT</td>
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<td>Local Recovery Support</td>
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<td>Recovery Housing</td>
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<td>Mobile Technology to Assess and Address Relapse Risk</td>
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### Health Care System

- Justice System
- Addiction Treatment Programs
- Community Programs

Connecting Recovery | Healing Communities
24/7 MAT Access Points

- Goal is to increase access to MAT services by providing intake access 24 hours a day / 365 days a year
- 3 locations in the greater Phoenix area and 1 location in Southern Arizona
- Hub and spoke model so people can seek treatment when they have the moment of hope and can then transfer to other MAT providers in the community
- Support community efforts in decreasing preventable deaths for people actively using opioids
- Increased education surrounding OUD and available treatment options
- Partnering with local harm reduction networks
Looking for 24/7 access to care for MAT?

CODAC Health, Recovery and Wellness
380 E. Ft. Lowell Road, Tucson, AZ 85705
520-202-1786

Community Medical Services
2806 W. Cactus Road, Phoenix, AZ 85029
602-607-7000

Community Bridges, East Valley Addiction Recovery Center
560 S. Bellview, Mesa, AZ 85204
480-461-1711

Intensive Treatment Systems, West Clinic
4136 N. 75th Ave #116 Phoenix, AZ 85033
623-247-1234
Questions?

Thank you! For future communication or questions:

Tina.braham@cmsgiveshope.com

www.communitymedicalservices.com