

Medication for Opioid Use Disorder: An Educational Outreach Campaign!

IHS focuses on ensuring comprehensive, culturally appropriate care for those with opioid use disorder (OUD). Through [Medications for Opioid Use Disorder \(MOUD\)](#), IHS integrates evidence-based treatments—combining pharmacological interventions with counseling and culturally supportive services. MOUD has been shown to reduce withdrawal symptoms, cravings, illicit use, and overdose risk, while improving treatment retention and survival.

Effective OUD treatment and recovery begin with creating non-judgmental care spaces, ensuring access to medications across settings, connecting patients to support systems, and promoting harm reduction strategies at all stages of care. The IHS developed evidence-based resources to support prescribers and health systems in expanding access to MOUD and facilitating seamless care coordination.

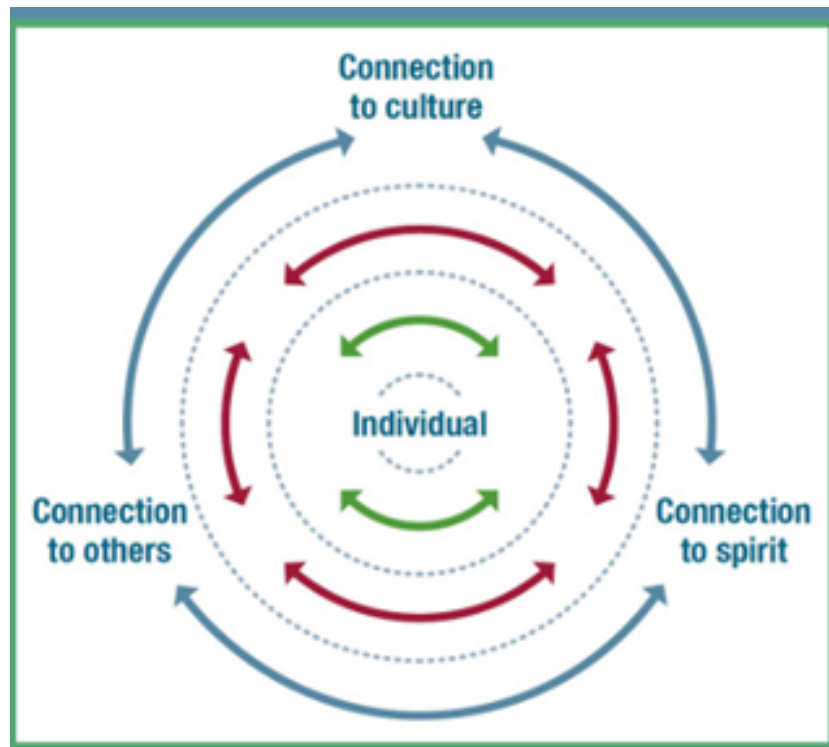
Consider learning more by reviewing resources available at your fingertips!

- Identifying and [addressing OUD](#): high-level overview of key messages including stigma, screening, diagnosis, and initiating treatment
- [Treating OUD](#) and supporting recovery: in-depth clinical information on key messages
- [Q&A](#) about OUD: address common myths – community audience
- [Learning about OUD](#): patient brochure and overview
- Provider [Reference Card](#): key messages, diagnostic support, and routine care descriptions that are sometimes omitted in primary care
- Claim Continuing Education Credits: Review full clinical document [Management of OUD](#) across the care continuum, instructions on page 47



Care of patients with OUD is not linear or one-size-fits-all. Options to engage in recovery services should be flexible and community-focused:

- **Focus on treatment successes rather than problems**
- **Help build positive connections with events that do not center around opioids/ substance use**

Focus on the Person



Opioid dependence is not the same as opioid addiction¹

Tolerance		Physiologic dependence		Opioid use disorder/ addiction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• need for increased dose of a drug to achieve the same effect• can occur even when taken as prescribed		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• physiologic adaptations to the chronic presence of a drug to maintain normal function• sudden absence of drug can lead to withdrawal		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uncontrollable drug use despite harmful consequences

If a patient takes prescribed opioids for chronic pain or OUD and develops physical dependence without any impairment in daily functioning, they are not considered to have an addiction.

- Visit [hhs.gov/opa](https://www.hhs.gov/opa) for more information and resources
- The [MOUD](https://www.2025.ih.gov/opa) website houses all campaign materials!

FDA moves to change labeling on buprenorphine dosing

- The Food and Drug Administration issued a notice to the Federal Register in December 2024 to clarify buprenorphine dosing limits. The American Medical Association has [summarized](#) the issue to inform health care professionals.

Buprenorphine: Getting Started

The medication's [success](#) is similar whether started in the emergency department or at home.

A few [options](#) exist to a void precipitated withdrawal, consider a low dose or “microdose” of buprenorphine and slowly increase. Doses up to 24 mg are safe and may be needed for some patients. Review the available NEW resources and quick-start guides to find an individualized dosing strategy that fit's the patient's needs.

CLINICIAN-TO-CLINICIAN SUBSTANCE USE WARMLINE (855) 300-3595

6am - 5pm PST (Mon-Fri)

Submit cases online: nccc.ucsf.edu

Free, confidential, on-demand tele-consultation service for providers seeking expert support for evaluation and management of opioid, alcohol, and other substance use.

Calls are welcome from ALL healthcare providers in Federal, Tribal, and Urban facilities.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Do medications to treat OUD replace one addiction with another?

- No, MOUD protects a person from overdose; allowing them to regain function in society

Will treatment cure someone?

- No, just as diabetes is not “cured” by insulin, people with OUD are not “cured” by medication, but can be used to better manage their condition



Newsletter written by HOPE Committee.
Contact [CDR Kristin Allmaras](#) with questions.
Visit ihs.gov/opioids or scan the QR code now!

Sign-up for the [HOPE Listserv](#) for timely news and updates!

