

The Case for Buprenorphine Initiation in the Emergency Department: Why, When, and How?

Hosted by Dr. Todd Mandell, Principal Investigator for the National Institute on Drug Abuse Clinical Trials Network Dissemination Initiative (NIDA CTN DI)

Hospital CEOs and executives, health system administrators, clinicians, and staff, listen and learn from medical experts about the importance and effectiveness of starting buprenorphine in emergency departments. This four-part podcast series begins with Dr. Arjun Venkatesh exploring the use of information technology and decision-making tools to improve care for patients with opioid use disorder, emphasizing the importance of value-based payment models and quality improvement projects. Dr. Gail D'Onofrio then discusses the clinical evidence supporting buprenorphine's effectiveness in reducing overdose risk and improving emergency department treatment outcomes. In his podcast Dr. Andrew Herring speaks about the accessibility and immediate care provided by emergency departments and highlights initiatives that are transforming the approach to treating opioid use disorder in these settings. Dr. Eric Dickson finishes the series by sharing his approach to addressing the opioid crisis and discusses the role of leadership in prioritizing resources and promoting access to treatment. Overall, the podcasts provide education and resources for integrating buprenorphine initiation into routine practice in emergency departments to provide evidence-based treatment for opioid use disorder.

Available for CME credit through MyCME.com.



Arjun Venkatesh, MD, MBA, MHS
Yale School of Medicine, Professor of Emergency Medicine; Chair, Emergency Medicine; Scientist, Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation, Internal Medicine

EXPLORING TECHNOLOGY CONNECTION

Dr. Arjun Venkatesh discusses the use of information technology and decision-making tools, such as electronic health records and the EMBED clinical decision support tool, to improve care for opioid use disorder patients. He emphasizes the importance of value-based payment models and quality indicators in driving quality improvement projects and encourages hospital leaders to implement programs and resources to support evidence-based treatments for opioid use disorder.

Resource Links:

- [American Academy of Emergency Physicians \(ACEP\) Clinical Emergency Data Registry \(CEDR\)](#)
- [User centered Clinical Decision Support to Implement Initiation of Buprenorphine for Opioid Use Disorder in the Emergency Department: EMBED Pragmatic Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial](#)



Gail D'Onofrio, MD, MS
Yale School of Medicine Albert E. Kent Professor of Emergency Medicine; Professor of Epidemiology (Chronic Diseases); Professor of Medicine Core Addiction

EXAMINING THE CLINICAL EVIDENCE

Dr. Gail D'Onofrio highlights the effectiveness of buprenorphine in reducing overdose risk and promoting patient engagement in treatment for opioid use disorder. Embedding buprenorphine initiation pathways in electronic health records has increased physician utilization, and the American College of Emergency Physicians and the Legal Action Center recommend its use in emergency departments. Initiating buprenorphine in the emergency department leads to improved engagement in treatment, reduced emergency department visits, and decreased hospitalizations. Hospitals are urged to integrate buprenorphine initiation into routine practice to fulfill their legal obligation of providing evidence-based treatments.

Resource Links:

- [The Legal Action Center Report](#)
- [The ACEP Consensus Statement](#)
- [Emergency Department-Initiated Buprenorphine/Naloxone Treatment for Opioid Dependence: A Randomized Clinical Trial](#)



Andrew Herring, MD
Founder and Principal Investigator, CA Bridge; Director of Research, Department of Emergency Medicine and Systemwide Medical Director, Substance Use Disorder Treatment, Alameda Health System; Assistant Clinical Professor, University of California, San Francisco

DEVELOPING A PARTNER NETWORK

Dr. Andrew Herring emphasizes the significance of the emergency department as an accessible and immediate treatment option for individuals with opioid use disorder, highlighting the benefits of starting buprenorphine treatment in this setting. He discusses the successes of the California Bridge Project, alongside initiatives like Project ASSERT and the E-QUAL Opioid Initiative, that are transforming the approach to opioid utilization in emergency departments, promoting comprehensive care, reducing hospital utilization, and improving overall well-being.

Resource Links:

- [National Bridge Network](#)
- [Project ASSERT \(Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, Education, and Referral to Treatment\), Yale School of Medicine](#)
- [American College of Emergency Physicians \(ACEP\) Emergency Quality Network \(E-QUAL\) Opioid Initiative](#)
- [MATTERS \(Medication for Addiction Treatment and Electronic Referrals\)](#)



Eric W. Dickson, MD, MHCM, FACEP
President and Chief Executive Officer, UMass Memorial Health Care; Professor of Emergency Medicine, UMass Chan Medical School; Faculty member, Institute for Healthcare Improvement

DRIVING RESEARCH INTO ACTION

Dr. Eric Dickson shares his approach as a health system CEO to addressing the opioid crisis and using evidence-based approaches to improve care for patients with opioid use disorder, emphasizing the use of data and storytelling to garner support. He highlights the role of leadership in prioritizing resources and discusses the responsibilities of the Chief Opioid Officer in his organization, including education, rescue therapy, stewardship of opioids, and promoting access to treatment. Dr. Dickson encourages hospital leaders to show personal commitment and empower those responsible for implementing solutions.

Resource Links:

- [Statement on the UMass Memorial Opioid Crisis Task Force](#)
- [What is Fentanyl and Why is it Behind the Deadly Surge in US Drug Overdoses? A Medical Toxicologist Explains](#)
- [UMass Memorial Health Rolls Out the Kraft Community Care in Reach Mobile Unit, Donated by the Robert K. Kraft Family, to Enhance Lifesaving Addiction and Medical Services](#)