

Provider Guide

Resources for preventing and treating opioid abuse and overdose in your community.

Little things have never mattered so much.

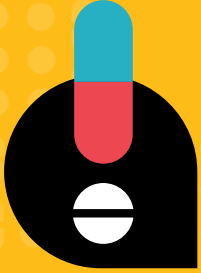


LITTLE

THINGS

MATTER


They don't call it an epidemic lightly.



Each day in the United States, an estimated 115 Americans die from an opioid overdose.¹ In addition to this alarming statistic, an estimated 1.8 million Americans have an opioid use disorder related to prescription opioid painkillers, while another 626,000 have an opioid use disorder related to heroin use.²

As a healthcare provider, you might already know these statistics. But you might not know about all the ways you can help fight the opioid epidemic.

Today, you're on the front lines and our community needs you.

This guide is meant to help you prevent and address opioid misuse in Bernalillo County. Here, you'll find tips on best practices as well as how to identify, treat, and manage opioid use disorder. You'll also learn about the best ways to talk to your patients about correct storage and disposal methods as well as the risks of opioid addiction.

One conversation can make the difference. It's time to have that conversation now.



Step Up. Less is more.

Reduce access, reduce risk. Little things can save a life.

As a healthcare provider, you are in a special position to fight the opioid epidemic. By offering compassionate care and relevant information about the risks and benefits of any treatment, you can prevent opioid misuse in your practice. Below are some small actions you can take today.

1. Maximize your non-opioid prescription and alternative treatment options.

Management of chronic pain is never a one-size-fits-all affair. Thankfully, there are plenty of different therapeutic methods, most of which are far less risky than opioid therapy. Physical therapy and non-opioid pharmacological treatment should always be first-line treatment options.

Click below for the NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

[NCCIH](#)

2. Make the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) review and update a regular and universal practice.

The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program is an online tool for healthcare providers to report and track the prescription of controlled substances in their community. The PDMP allows providers to see what other drugs their patients may have been prescribed and share data with other providers. Make sure you or your staff are consistently updating the PDMP to reflect the medications you're prescribing.

Report on and track the prescription of controlled substances in your community.

[Check the PDMP](#)



3. Screen patients appropriately for Opioid Use Disorder.

If you believe your patient may have an opioid use disorder, consult the DSM V diagnostic criteria and the Opioid Risk Tool (ORT).

[CDC Training Module](#)

[Opioid Risk Tool](#)

4. Provide tapering and transition plan options.

Every opioid treatment plan should include treatment goals and a proposed end date. “Start low and go slow” is the best rule. Always start with immediate-release opioids, and prescribe no more than is reasonably needed. When opioids are needed for acute pain, never prescribe extended-release/long-acting opioids. Make it clear to your patients that the goal is to get off opioids as quickly and safely as possible, whether that means tapering off or transitioning to a different treatment.

The CDC has a very useful tapering guide. Click below for quick access.

[CDC Tapering Guide](#)

5. Emphasize open communication with patients about safe usage, storage and disposal of opioid medications.

Be direct and honest with your patients about the risks of their opioid medications—not just to themselves, but to anyone who could potentially access their drugs. By speaking without judgement and making it clear that addiction can happen to anyone, you’ll make it easier for patients to approach you with their own concerns.

Review our patient checklist as a good starting point.

[Patient Checklist](#)

6. Provide appropriate resources for patients with Opioid Use Disorder.

Facilitate or offer evidence-based Medication Assisted Treatment in addition to appropriate behavioral health treatment for patients with correctly diagnosed Opioid Use Disorder (based on appropriate diagnostic criteria and screening). Note that methadone for OUD can only be prescribed by licensed opioid treatment programs. Prescribing buprenorphine for OUD requires completing training and obtaining a waiver, while naltrexone can be prescribed by any provider with prescribing authority.

7. Provide Naloxone and medication assisted treatment resources.

We strongly advise providing Naloxone, along with instructions on how to effectively use it, to any patient with an opioid prescription. Explain Senate Bill 221 to patients, which, in the state of New Mexico, requires co-prescriptions of Narcan®/Naloxone if the prescriber provides at least a five day supply of an opioid medication. Also make sure patients know to call 911 in addition to administering Naloxone in the case of an overdose emergency.

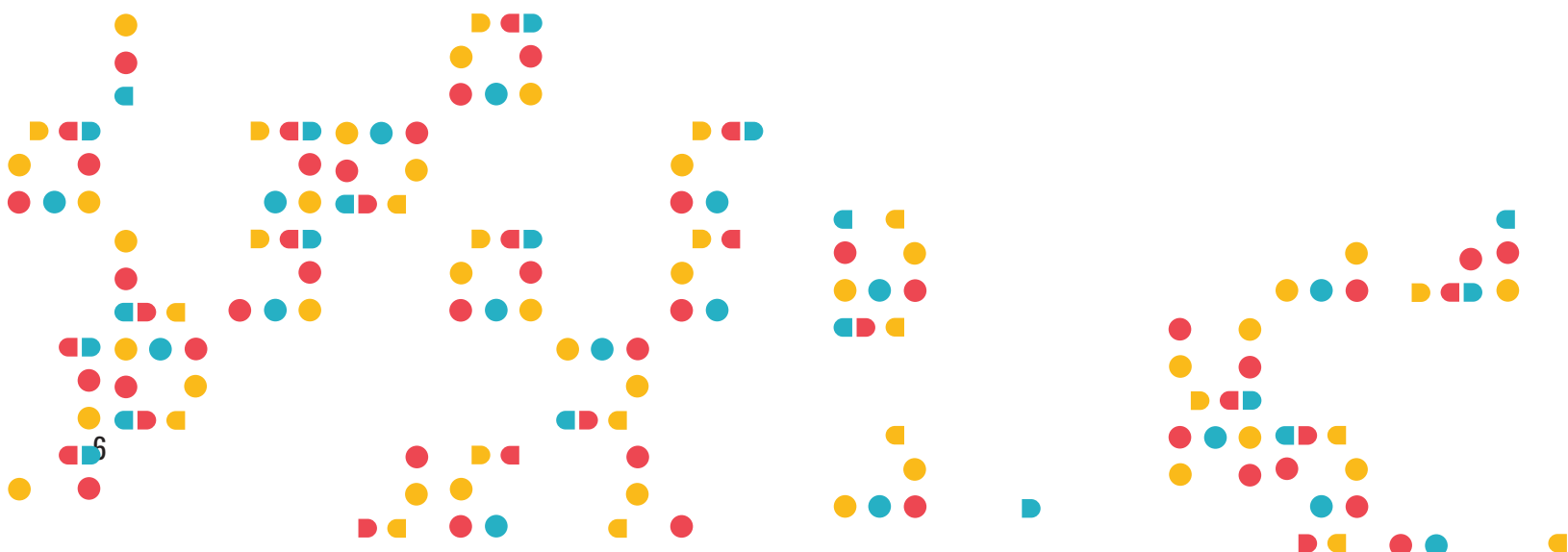
Please click below for resources about DATA waivers and Medication Assisted Treatment.

[NM Waiver Training](#)

[SAMHSA Guidelines](#)

New Mexico State law requires co-prescriptions of Narcan®/Naloxone in some cases. Review the law by clicking below.

[Senate Bill 221](#)



Resources and Tools

Safe Disposal

One of the most important steps we can take in preventing opioid misuse is proper disposal of unused medications.

Not only should you tell your patients to dispose of unused or expired medications, but you should be aware of the resources available in Bernalillo County to assist your patients with safe disposal. [The Albuquerque Police Department's Household Pharmaceutical Disposal Program](#) is a great starting place for resources and police substation locations that take returned medications for disposal. You should also become familiar with the pharmacies you regularly prescribe to in order to tell patients how to properly return or turn in unused medications to their pharmacies (if allowed or available) and provide resources for home disposal such as drug deactivation bags.

Prescribing Guidelines

There are many tools available to help you manage chronic pain in your opioid dependent/tolerant patients and patients who might be developing a use disorder. It is important to use the proper screening tools to evaluate if a patient is merely experiencing tolerance to a drug or developing the behavioral changes that can tip them into use disordered behavior.

See the latest resources available from the CDC and SAMHSA to guide your prescribing process.

CDC Prescribing Guidelines



BCCHC is here to help you and our community.

The Opioid Accountability Initiative was created in 2012 by the Bernalillo County Community Health Council to address the rising number of opioid overdose deaths in Bernalillo County. Our tactics involve prevention, harm reduction, treatment and law enforcement efforts to tackle the opioid issue from multiple angles.

The Opioid Accountability Initiative gives prescribers and providers the resources they need to build better preventative health practices. We also aim to fill the gaps in our community's access to screening, treatment and management resources. All of our efforts, including this guide, are developed with direct feedback from the community and the most current evidence-based national guidelines for chronic pain and safe opioid prescribing.

Our outreach to the community also includes something we call “Academic Detailing.” This is our way of encouraging community members to discuss safe opioid use with their providers, and of assisting physicians with unbiased, non-commercial and evidence-based information about opioid prescribing and use. Please **contact us** at BCCHC if you are interested in becoming involved.

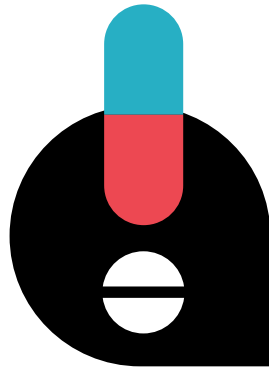
What is Academic Detailing? Click below for the link to the National Resource Center for Academic Detailing.

NaRCAD

References

¹ Wide-ranging online data for epidemiologic research (2017) Atlanta, GA: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics; Available at <http://wonder.cdc.gov>

² Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2017). Key Substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



LittleThingsNM.org