“If you’re on suboxone, you’re not in recovery”

Medication Assisted Treatment Successes and Stigma

Presenters
Erin Stack, MS
Nicole Cerra, MPH
Acknowledgements

Lauren Maxim, PhD (RMC Research)

John McIlveen, PhD (OHA)

Dana Peterson (OHA)

Funder: Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
List successful outcomes of MAT

Describe stigma experienced by MAT clients

Discuss ways to increase MAT acceptance and increase treatment utilization
The Need in Oregon

Oregon has one of the highest rates of prescription opioid misuse in the nation

On average 3 Oregonians die every week from prescription opioid overdose

Obstacles to accessing MAT
- Limited availability of waivered physicians
- Geographical barriers
- Institutional barriers
- Stigma and discrimination
Oregon’s MAT-PDOA grant program targets 4 high-risk, rural communities

- Scappoose
- Roseburg
- Bend
- North Bend

The program includes:

- Adapt (Opioid Treatment Program) in Roseburg
- Adapt (Opioid Treatment Program) in North Bend
- Bend Treatment Center (Opioid Treatment Program) in Bend
- OHSU Family Medicine (Primary Care Clinic) in Scappoose
MAT-PDOA Objectives

Increase access to MAT by expanding treatment service systems and increasing capacity in rural, underserved areas

Improve treatment outcomes and retention

Increase the number of DATA 2000 waivered physicians actively prescribing buprenorphine
MAT-PDOA Evaluation

1. Client Outcome Surveys
2. Staff Interviews
3. Client Focus Groups
MAT-PDOA Evaluation

1. Client Outcome Surveys
2. Staff Interviews
3. Client Focus Groups
MAT clients used heroin and nonprescribed OxyContin/Oxycodone on fewer days in the past month at 6 months after intake.
Clients reported decreased stress, giving up engagement in important activities, and emotional problems due to the use of alcohol or drugs.

During the past 30 days:

How stressful have things been for you because of your use of alcohol or other drugs?

Has your use of alcohol or other drugs caused you to reduce or give up important activities?

Has your use of alcohol or other drugs caused you to have emotional problems?

DESIRED DIRECTION OF CHANGE

intake

6-month

SIGNIFICANT
Clients had fewer days of anxiety and depression and improved mental well being in the past month at 6 months after intake.
Clients had mixed outcomes on quality of life indicators

How would you rate your quality of life?
Have you enough money to meet your needs?
Do you have enough energy for everyday life?
How satisfied are you with your ability to perform your daily activities?
How satisfied are you with your personal relationships?
How satisfied are you with the conditions of your living space?
How satisfied are you with your health?
How satisfied are you with yourself?

DESIRED DIRECTION
intake
6-month
SIGNIFICANT

DESIRED DIRECTION
OF CHANGE
“My family has seen me quit doing criminality, they have seen me quit chasing the drug and [MAT] just has bettered my life. It’s made me a better person being able to come here. I don’t have to worry about going back to jail or hurt[ing] someone to get a drug, or get[ting] hurt.”
Clients’ Experiences of Stigma
Clients’ Experiences of Stigma

• Healthcare providers
• Police
• Medical transport drivers
• Treatment community
• Family
• Friends
I recently got 14 teeth pulled – when the nurse saw the list of medications I was on, she turned around and told the other lady, “Make sure you write no narcotics on this one.” When I left, I’m taking my Suboxone and I’m thinking okay it’s gonna help with the pain. I was dying, literally dying [of pain]. They just gave no narcotics – nothing. And when I came in [to my primary care clinic] for a check-up, the doctors were like, ‘We would have helped.’ But because of the stigma, you don’t think to ask, and I don’t want to look like I’m pill searching or something.
“My wife tried taking my daughter from me. The cops came – they were like: ‘Well, your wife says you’re on methadone and that obviously impairs your judgment – you shouldn’t have your daughter if you’re gonna be on methadone.’”
I can’t really talk about Suboxone in [off-site group] meetings, but I can talk about it here, and it really feels good to be open. I definitely have more support now that I’ve come here and have gone to some of the groups and stayed regular."
My friends and family were so ready for me to stop [using opioids]. They were all like, ‘Thank god, you're doing something and it's working.’ I have almost 3½ years now, so I'm in a good place. Now that I've been in [treatment] over 3 years, people are now like, ‘When are you going to get off [medication]?’
I educated a couple of family members and I was kinda like, check it out for yourself if you have a problem with it. I finally have a job. I finally am able to buy a car. I’m in the process of buying a home. I don’t want to hear it. I went from literally living in my van to this in the last 2½ years, so to me it is what it is. If I have to take suboxone for the rest of my life, that’s up to me.
The people that are in my recovery with me now understand that because I’m under a doctor’s care and I receive medications—they don’t pass judgment on me. It’s not like I’m going out on the street and buying. They just see that I’m becoming a better person and it’s helping me, and they’re happy to see that after so many years."
How can we increase MAT acceptance and increase treatment utilization?
Understanding types of stigma

Self

Social

Structural

Strategies to Reduce Stigma

- Education
- Direct contact
Example Strategies to Address Types of Stigma:

Self stigma
Methadone anonymous

Social stigma
Stigma Free West Virginia

Structural stigma
Registered Nurses Association of Ontario
We can all change the way we talk about Opioid Use Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVOID</th>
<th>INSTEAD, USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addict, junkie</td>
<td>Person with substance use disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication Assisted Treatment</td>
<td>Medications for Addiction Treatment, Opioid Agonist Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean urine</td>
<td>Negative urine drug screen</td>
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</tbody>
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For more tips see: SAMSHA’s Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies, Words Matter: How Language Choice Can Reduce Stigma
Wrap Up

• MAT clients are having positive outcomes

• MAT clients continue to experience stigma related to being in MAT

• Let’s work together to mitigate MAT-related stigma so we can continue to promote the health and wellness of all Oregonians and help our communities thrive!
References


