



Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

Arlene González-Sánchez, M.S., L.M.S.W.
Commissioner

Department of Health

Howard A. Zucker, M.D, J.D.
Commissioner

February 2019

Dear Colleague:

Opioid Use Disorder and opioid related overdose morbidity and mortality continue to be a public health crisis. In 2016, there were more than 3,200 deaths associated with opioids statewide. That's nearly 9 deaths per day. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) are working together to increase access to the three medications used to treat Opioid Use Disorder: methadone, buprenorphine and long acting naltrexone.

This communication focuses on buprenorphine. Research and experience have led to changes in the standard of care in prescribing buprenorphine. In addition to these changes, there are misconceptions about the prescribers' responsibilities that impede referral to and initiation of treatment with buprenorphine.

The attached document, Implementing Transmucosal Buprenorphine for Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder, was developed to assist those caring for individuals with Opioid Use Disorder to integrate buprenorphine into their practices with the understanding that it will save lives. There are many resources in New York State to assist prescribers including free buprenorphine waiver training, mentoring and consultation.

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Stancliff, MD, Associate Director for Harm Reduction in Health Care, NYSDOH AIDS Institute at buprenorphine@health.ny.gov or Robert Kent, OASAS General Counsel at legal@oasas.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

Howard A. Zucker, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner
New York State Department of Health

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Commissioner
New York State Office of Alcoholism and
Substance Abuse Services