

How to treat Opioid Use Disorder

Quality
Standards

Health Quality Ontario, the provincial advisor on the quality of health care, has released a quality standard on how to treat people with opioid use disorder.

Below is a summary of the quality standard:

1. Identifying and Diagnosing Opioid Use Disorder

People at risk of opioid use disorder are asked about their opioid use and are further assessed as appropriate.

2. Comprehensive Assessment and Collaborative Care Plan

People diagnosed with or identified as having opioid use disorder have a comprehensive assessment and a care plan developed in collaboration with their care providers.

3. Addressing Physical Health, Mental Health, Additional Addiction Treatment Needs, and Social Needs

People with opioid use disorder have integrated, concurrent, culturally safe management of their physical health, mental health, additional addiction treatment needs, and social needs.

4. Information to Participate in Care

People with opioid use disorder are provided with information to enable them to participate in their care. If their family is involved, they are also provided with this information.

5. Opioid Agonist Therapy as First-Line Treatment

People with opioid use disorder are informed that treatment that includes opioid agonist therapy is safer and more effective than treatments that do not include opioid agonist therapy.

6. Access to Opioid Agonist Therapy

People diagnosed with or identified as having opioid use disorder have access to opioid agonist therapy as soon as possible, within a maximum of 3 days.

7. Treatment of Opioid Withdrawal Symptoms

People with opioid use disorder who are in moderate or severe withdrawal from opioids are offered relief of their symptoms with buprenorphine/naloxone within 2 hours.

8. Access to Take-Home Naloxone and to Overdose Education

People with opioid use disorder and their families have immediate access to take-home naloxone and to overdose education.

9. Tapering Off of Opioid Agonist Therapy

People who have achieved sustained stability on opioid agonist therapy who wish to taper off are supported in a collaborative slow taper if clinically appropriate.

10. Concurrent Mental Health Disorders

People with opioid use disorder who also have a mental health disorder are offered concurrent treatment for their mental health disorder.

11. Harm Reduction

People who use opioids have same-day access to harm reduction services. A comprehensive harm reduction approach includes education, safe supplies, infectious disease testing, vaccinations, appropriate referrals, and supervised consumption services.

To see the complete quality standard and accompanying guide for patients, visit:

HQOntario.ca/OpioidUseDisorder

What are quality standards?

Quality standards outline what high-quality care looks like for conditions and topics where there are large variations in how care is delivered, or gaps between the care provided and the care patients should receive. They are based on the best available evidence and are created in partnership with patients and health care professionals.

They are intended to:

- Help patients know what to ask for in their care
- Help health care professionals know what care they should be offering

- Help organizations improve the quality of care they provide
- Help health system planners make decisions regionally and system-wide that support the implementation of evidence-based health care

How are quality standards different from other standards and guidelines?

Quality standards are concise statements designed to help health professionals easily and quickly know what care to provide, based on the best available evidence. They include a patient guide to help patients, their families and informal caregivers know what to discuss about their care with their health care professionals.