

Addressing the Toxic Drug Supply Crisis: Diversifying OUD Treatment Options

Communities across the province face growing risks due to the potency and toxicity of the illegal drug supply. People are turning to leaders like you for actionable solutions. Recognizing the urgent need for diversified opioid use disorder treatment, our team engaged stakeholders to build on existing strengths and identify effective, actionable strategies. We conducted extensive fieldwork, collaborating with healthcare providers, clients, and other stakeholders, to uncover how injectable and oral OAT programs in BC engage and keep clients connected to care. We identified four core elements to diversifying opioid use disorder (OUD) care: 1) **flexible care delivery**, 2) **responsiveness to clients' needs**, 3) **supporting social capital**, and 4) **offering a spectrum of medications and formulations**. This document is provided as a distillation of our findings and should be interpreted in the context of the full report, available at: bit.ly/ioatKThub.

Here is what you can do. This checklist distills our findings and research into actionable steps that you can take today to create a system of care that supports everyone, everywhere:

Support Practice Change

- Collaborate with MoH, MMHA, the College of Pharmacists, and health authorities to create a guidance document for piloting diversified care approaches for OUD (e.g., iOAT deliveries, prescribed alternatives). This document should include clear guidelines on acceptable practices, evaluation metrics, and reporting requirements
- Establish partnership agreements outlining the responsibilities and protections for clinics and providers, detailing the support from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, MMHA, MoH, and other applicable regulatory colleges. These measures will provide legal and professional safeguards, encouraging providers to innovate and generate knowledge without fear of professional repercussions

Facilitate Flexible Medication Dispensing

- Collaborate with the College of Pharmacists to modify regulations to allow OUD opioid prescriptions to be dispensed and delivered in various locations, including community pharmacies, supportive housing, and community-based organizations
- Enhance EMR integration and establish protocols for medication transportation, shipping, deliveries, and take-home doses (where indicated)

Enhance Regulatory Frameworks with Diverse Evidence Integration

- Develop regulatory practice standards for prescribed alternatives to encourage registrants to integrate them into their practice and assess ethical considerations
- Modify practice standards for OUD care to encourage registrants to not only apply the BCCSU clinical practice guidelines, but also to utilize a broader range of available evidence-based resources. This should include supplementary clinical protocols, international research, and clinical guidance documents from other reputable organizations and experts. This will ensure regulations are not only evidence-informed, but practical and agile enough to respond to the evolving and emerging clinical practices for OUD care

We recognize that these actions are complex and there are additional considerations, rules, and regulations that influence what you can do. Our team is committed to collaborating to understand these nuances and to facilitate the implementation of these approaches. We are eager to meet with you to discuss these matters further and work together towards effective solutions.

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