

Microdosing as a novel alternative buprenorphine induction strategy for patients with opioid use disorder

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Background and Purpose

- Buprenorphine-naloxone (bupe) is a well-studied, highly effective medication for the treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD).
- The traditional bupe induction requires patients to be in mild withdrawal before starting the medication.
- An alternative induction strategy called microdosing is a novel way to start patients on bupe, with patients reporting minimal withdrawal and high satisfaction with the induction process.^{1,2,3}
- This project aimed to develop materials and expand knowledge in the use of microdosing as an alternative strategy for buprenorphine inductions.

Methods

The project team completed an evidence review.

The available evidence was used to create the project resources.

The resources were reviewed by both addiction medicine and primary care providers.

The resources were published on a public facing Dropbox.

The resources were presented to healthcare providers at several different practice settings.

Outcomes

Creation of project resources

Four protocols based on prior opioid used were created:

- Short-acting opioids
- Long-acting opioids
- Methadone (once daily dosing)
- Methadone (split daily dosing)

Provider guide including evidence, protocols, smart tools, and commonly encountered issues was created.

Patient decision guide including information on medication and induction options was created.

Patient graphics for each microdosing protocol were created.

The resources created as a part of this project were published to a public facing Dropbox link (QR code to the right).

The local jail is now incorporating the microdosing protocols created as a part of this project in their transfer and release processes.

Presentations on this project were given to MD, NP, and PA providers from various practice settings.

The PA Author of this project was approved for a SAMHSA exemption request to perform methadone inductions in New York State.

Expansion of evidence-based OUD treatment practices

Expansion of the role of the PA in OUD treatment

References

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Conclusion

- Microdosing is a novel buprenorphine induction technique with the potential to help patients who have a history of difficult bupe inductions, or anxiety surrounding the induction process.
- The resources created as part of this project were designed to streamline microdosing inductions and to support healthcare providers who wish to offer this induction strategy to their patients.
- Further research should be done to assess the effectiveness of the microdosing schedules outlined in this project, to determine improvement points for future resource development.



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