

ED plays critical role in caring for patients with opioid use disorder

September 5 2018



(HealthDay)—Emergency department providers need evidence-based

strategies to identify and manage patients with opioid use disorder, according to a review published in the *Annals of Emergency Medicine*.

Herbert C. Duber, M.D., M.P.H., from the University of Washington in Seattle, and colleagues examined current strategies for identifying patients with [opioid](#) use disorder, the treatment of patients with acute opioid withdrawal syndrome, approaches to medication-assisted therapy, and the transition of patients with opioid use disorder from the [emergency department](#) to outpatient services.

Based on the review of the literature, the researchers recommend targeted screening of at-risk individuals using the Revised Screener and Opioid Assessment for Patients With Pain or the National Institute on Drug Abuse-modified Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test in the emergency department. Additionally, emergency department providers should use the prescription drug monitoring program when prescribing opioids. For symptomatic patients with acute opioid withdrawal, medication-assisted therapy and follow-up should be considered for all patients, with initiation of treatment in the emergency department. Finally, systems of care are needed to facilitate the transition of [patients](#) to follow-up care in the community setting.

"A robust infrastructure to support, educate, and enable emergency physicians to manage opioid use disorder in an evidence-based fashion and rapidly transition care to outpatient services is a necessary step in turning the tide against an [opioid epidemic](#) affecting communities nationwide," the authors write.

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Citation: ED plays critical role in caring for patients with opioid use disorder (2018, September 5) retrieved 28 December 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-09-ed-critical-role-patients-opioid.html>

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