



Primary Care Opioid Prescribing Support Service

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This primary care opioid prescribing support service helps practice leaders, health care professionals, and administrative staff improve their management of opioid prescriptions for patients with non-palliative, chronic pain. This service includes a Toolkit that combines redesign of office practice workflow with proven strategies to manage opioid prescribing. This Toolkit was developed for ambulatory care clinics in Vermont.

What kind of support is provided?

The support service team offers education and training to use the Toolkit and interpret the strategies it provides, review of practice prescribing data with practice members, guidance for startup of a Quality Improvement (QI) team within the organization, ongoing coaching as the practice-based QI team progresses, and mini conferences with practice members on cases and unique issues that arise.

What is in the Toolkit?

The Toolkit collects the best practice strategies for managing opioid prescriptions in primary care ambulatory settings. It organizes these strategies for health care professionals who want to initiate opioid treatment wisely, maintain treatment safely, and adjust when needed. It includes methods of team-based problem solving to create workflows that work for the individual clinical site and its members.

What are some of the results from using this service and Toolkit?

Starting in 2012, *twenty-seven (27) ambulatory practices* have used this service and its Toolkit and reported positive results from the best practice strategies they chose to implement. In many cases there were multiple positive outcomes: a more standardized approach to prescribing, increased confidence in managing opioid prescriptions, a team approach to helping patients with chronic pain, and increased prescriber and staff satisfaction with the way opioid prescriptions are managed.

What is needed to effectively use this service?

Identify a champion for each practice site involved, along with a team leader for a QI project, a team QI facilitator (does not need previous training in QI), and multi-disciplinary team members including *at least* one prescriber, one nurse or medical assistant, and one front desk/scheduling/ administrative operations staff. These team members must be able to meet over a three month period for a total of eight hours of team time, plus dedicated time to work on tasks between meetings.

This service is part of system of support offered by the Office of Primary Care at the University of Vermont. Other services include education programs such as Academic Detailing and ECHO virtual learning communities.

Please email any inquiries about this service to opc@uvm.edu.

For a free copy of the Opioid Prescribing Toolkit, go to [Opioid Prescribing Toolkit](http://www.vtahec.org), located at www.vtahec.org.

January 2020