

Portland State University

PDXScholar

OHSU-PSU School of Public Health Faculty
Publications and Presentations

OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

4-1-2020

Opioid Agonist Therapy During Hospitalization Within the Veterans Health Administration: a Pragmatic Retrospective Cohort Analysis

Kelsey C. Priest

OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

Travis I. Lovejoy

OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

Honora Englander

Oregon Health & Science University

Sarah Shull

VA Portland Health Care System

Dennis McCarty

Oregon Health & Science University

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/sph_facpub



Part of the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#), and the [Military and Veterans Studies Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Citation Details

Priest, K. C., Lovejoy, T. I., Englander, H., Shull, S., & McCarty, D. (2020). Opioid Agonist Therapy During Hospitalization Within the Veterans Health Administration: a Pragmatic Retrospective Cohort Analysis. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

This Post-Print is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in OHSU-PSU School of Public Health Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

1 *This is a post-peer-review, pre-copyedit version of an article published in the Journal of*
2 *General Internal Medicine. The final authenticated version is available online at:*
3 *<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11606-020-05815-0>.*
4

5 **Title**

6 Opioid agonist therapy during hospitalization within the Veterans Health Administration:
7 A pragmatic retrospective cohort analysis
8

9 **Running Title**

10 Opioid agonist therapy during hospitalization
11

12 **Authors**

13 Kelsey C. Priest, PhD, MPH^{1,2}

14 Travis I. Lovejoy, PhD, MPH^{2,3,4}

15 Honora Englander, MD⁵

16 Sarah Shull, PhD⁴

17 Dennis McCarty, PhD²
18

19 **Affiliations**

20 ¹School of Medicine, MD/PhD Program, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon,
21 United States

22 ²School of Public Health, Oregon Health & Science University-Portland State University,
23 Portland, Oregon, United States

24 ³Department of Psychiatry, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon, United
25 States

26 ⁴Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland,
27 Oregon, United States

28 ⁵Division of Hospital Medicine & Section of Addiction Medicine, Department of Medicine,
29 Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon, United States
30

31 **Corresponding Author**

32 Kelsey C. Priest, PhD, MPH

33 Email: priest@ohsu.edu

34 Address: Oregon Health & Science University, 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd, Mail Code: L357,
35 Portland, OR 97239
36

37 **Manuscript Word Count:** 2,997

38 **Abstract Word Count:** 280

39 **Number of Tables:** 3

40 **Number of Figures:** 2

41 **Number of Appendices:** 5

42 **Online Supplement:** 1

43 **Number of References:** 44

44 **Keywords (up to 5):** Opioid agonist therapy; methadone; buprenorphine; hospital medicine;
45 opioid use disorder

46

47

48

Abstract

49 **Background:** Hospitalization of patients with opioid use disorder (OUD) is increasing, yet little is
50 known about opioid agonist therapy (OAT: methadone and buprenorphine) administration
51 during admission.

52

53 **Objective:** Describe and examine patient-and hospital-level characteristics associated with OAT
54 receipt during hospitalization in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

55

56 **Participants:** 12,407 unique patients, ≥ 18 years old, with an OUD-related ICD-10 diagnosis
57 within 12 months prior to or during index hospitalization in fiscal year 2017 from 109 VHA
58 hospitals in the continental United States.

59

60 **Main Measure:** OAT received during hospitalization.

61

62 **Key Results:** Few admissions received OAT ($n = 1,914$; 15%) and when provided it was most
63 often for withdrawal management ($n = 834$; 7%). Among patients not on OAT prior to admission
64 who survived hospitalization ($n = 10,969$), 2.0% ($n = 203$) were newly initiated on OAT with
65 linkage to care after hospital discharge. Hospitals varied in the frequency of OAT delivery (range
66 0% to 43% of qualified admissions). Patients with pre-admission OAT (Adjusted Odds Ratio
67 [AOR] = 15.30; 95% CI [13.2, 17.7]), acute OUD diagnosis (AOR = 2.3; 95% CI [1.99, 2.66]), and
68 male gender (AOR 1.52; 95% CI [1.16, 2.01]) had increased odds of OAT receipt. Patients who
69 received non-OAT opioids (AOR 0.53; 95 CI [0.46, 0.61]) or surgical procedures (AOR 0.75; 95 CI
70 [0.57, 0.99]) had decreased odds of OAT receipt. Large (AOR = 2.0; 95% CI [1.39, 3.00]) and
71 medium-sized (AOR = 1.9; 95% CI [1.33, 2.70]) hospitals were more likely to provide OAT.

72

73 **Conclusions:** In a sample of VHA inpatient medical admissions, OAT delivery was infrequent,
74 varied across the health system, and was associated with specific patient and hospital
75 characteristics. Policy and educational interventions should promote hospital-based OAT
76 delivery.

77

Introduction

78
79 Surging opioid-related hospitalizations challenge the acute care delivery system in the
80 United States (U.S.).¹ Opioid-related hospitalizations are associated with increased
81 readmissions² and 12% of patients admitted with an OUD-related condition leave the hospital
82 against medical advice.³ OUD-related admissions disproportionately burden public payers^{3,4} and
83 cost more than non-opioid-related admissions.^{3,5} Opioid agonist therapy (OAT)—buprenorphine
84 or methadone⁶—are provided infrequently and variably during hospitalization⁷ or upon
85 discharge.⁸ Underutilization occurs although OAT delivery during hospitalization is feasible^{9,10}
86 and OAT receipt is associated with decreased illicit opioid use upon discharge,⁹ reduced 30 and
87 90-day readmissions,¹¹ and increased post-hospital substance use disorder (SUD) treatment
88 engagement.^{11,12}

89 Veterans are particularly vulnerable as they are twice as likely to die from accidental
90 opioid overdose than non-veterans.¹³ OUD diagnoses within the Veterans Health
91 Administration (VHA) have increased by nearly two-fold between 2004 (n = 30,093)¹⁴ and 2017
92 (n = 54,078).¹⁵ The VHA's initiatives to increase OAT access¹⁶ include a system-wide
93 requirement that all VHA facilities provide access to OAT¹⁶ and follow national OUD treatment
94 guidelines.¹⁷ In fiscal year 2017, 41% (n = 22,179) of VHA patients with OUD received an OUD-
95 related pharmacotherapy.¹⁵ At the facility-level, OUD-related pharmacotherapy delivery ranged
96 from 2% to 76% across the VHA system.¹⁵ To date, little is known about inpatient practice for
97 this patient population. This multi-hospital retrospective study examines variation in OAT
98 delivery and receipt for hospitalized VHA patients with OUD.

99

Methods

Study Design and Cohort

A retrospective sample of unique acute medical and surgical inpatient admissions from fiscal year 2017 was extracted from the VHA Corporate Data Warehouse, a database containing national VHA patient electronic health record data. Eligible individuals were aged 18 or older with a primary or secondary OUD ICD-10 diagnosis from any source (inpatient, outpatient, and community care paid for by VHA) in the year preceding index hospitalization or during index hospitalization in fiscal year 2017. Facilities were restricted to “acute care hospitals” with at least 500 acute bed days of care delivered during the study period and at least 25 index admissions. Patients were excluded if they did not have a primary or secondary admission code, if they had an Elixhauser cancer flag,¹⁸ and if they had a hospital length of stay (LOS) within the 99th percentile (median 82 days, range 51 to 1,652 days). The 99% percentile LOS cutoff was chosen to capture those admitted with OUD-related infections warranting 4 to 6 weeks of inpatient antibiotics and to exclude chronic hospitalization. See Figure 1. The Veterans Affairs Portland Health Care System Institutional Review Board approved this study (# 4045).

Study Variables

Variable selection and construction were informed by the existing literature, data availability, and prior qualitative research.^{19,20} Study variables included patient demographics (age, gender, race, ethnicity), patient diagnoses present on admission (co-occurring mental health and SUD diagnoses), admission characteristics (intensive care unit [ICU] or surgical services received), and admission-related diagnoses (OUD-related infection, OUD-related diagnoses). Hospital characteristics included admission volume, acute OUD diagnosis volume

122 (the percentage of admissions with an acute OUD diagnosis during hospitalization), hospital
123 geographic location, and hospital size.

124 Pharmacotherapy variables were coded for three time periods: 1) 30 days pre-
125 admission; 2) during admission; and 3) 30 days post-admission. Non-OAT pharmacotherapy
126 included benzodiazepines, non-OAT opioids (e.g., oxycodone), naltrexone, naloxone, inpatient
127 use of first-line opioid withdrawal adjuvant (clonidine), and second-line withdrawal adjuvants
128 (baclofen, gabapentin/pregabalin, tizanidine). See Appendix Table 1 for additional details.

129 Admission OAT was categorized by four OAT delivery scenarios (OAT continued, OAT initiated
130 with linkage to care, OAT for withdrawal, and OAT sustained), see Table 1. Categories and
131 calculations involving post-admission care excluded patients who died during admission.

132 **Statistical Analysis**

133 RStudio²¹⁻²⁷ was used for descriptive statistics and bivariate analyses. Multilevel logistic
134 regression modeling used Stata²⁸ with an alpha value of 0.05. The dependent variable (level 1)
135 was any OAT received (yes/no) during hospitalization, and covariates were level 1 (patient) and
136 level 2 (hospital) continuous, binary, or categorical variables. See Appendix Table 2 for model
137 covariates. Covariate inclusion was based on literature review, study aims, and model fit.

138 Comparative model fit for nested models used the log-likelihood ratio test, the Akaike
139 Information Criterion, and the Bayesian Information Criterion. Regression coefficients, standard
140 errors, adjusted odds ratios (AOR) with 95% confidence intervals, and the intraclass correlation
141 coefficient (ICC) were reported. A sensitivity analysis examined whether a narrower OAT
142 administration definition during hospitalization changed study findings.

143

144

Results

145
146 **Patient Characteristics.** The study cohort included 12,407 unique patients with index
147 hospitalizations from 109 VHA acute care hospitals in the continental U.S. Most patients were
148 male (n = 11,543; 93%), white (n = 8,880; 72%) or Black (n = 2,706; 22%), and non-Hispanic or
149 Latino (n = 11,476; 93%) with a median age of 61 years (range 21 to 90). Over half of patients (n
150 = 8,094; 65%) had at least one co-occurring mental health diagnosis and nearly half had at least
151 one co-occurring SUD diagnosis (n = 6,024; 49%).

152 **Admission-Related Characteristics.** The median length of hospital stay was 5 days
153 (range 1 to 50 days). Nearly 20% of patients (n = 2,303) received ICU services and 6% (n = 779)
154 received surgical services. OUD-related infection or primary or secondary OUD-related
155 diagnoses occurred in 20% of admissions (n = 2,491) and 1% of patients died during admission
156 (n = 119).

157 **Pre-and-Post-Pharmacotherapy.** Approximately one in ten patients received OAT in the
158 30 days prior to admission (n = 1,325; 11.5%) and in the 30 days post hospital discharge (n =
159 1,420; 11.6%). Thirty percent of patients (n = 3,766) had an opioid prescription filled in the 30
160 days before admission and 35% (n = 4,250) filled an opioid prescription in the 30 days after
161 discharge.

162 **Admission Pharmacotherapy.** The majority of patients did not receive OAT during
163 admission (n = 10,493; 85%). In the 15% of admissions with OAT (n = 1,914), methadone was
164 more common (n = 1,049; 55%) than buprenorphine (n = 639; 33%). A small number of patients
165 (n = 136; 7.1%) received more than one type of OAT and 4.7% (n = 90) had non-specific
166 administration. For patients on OAT prior to admission (n = 1,325), 65% (n = 867) had their OAT

167 continued during admission and 35% (n = 458) had their OAT discontinued during admission—
168 regardless of receipt post-admission.

169 Related to withdrawal management, 9% of patients received the VHA’s recommended
170 first line adjuvant for opioid withdrawal—clonidine—and 39% (n = 1,089) received a second-
171 line adjuvant (baclofen, gabapentin/pregabalin, or tizanidine).²⁹ Over half of patients (55%; n =
172 6,765) received at least one non-OAT opioid (e.g., oxycodone) during admission.

173 **Hospital OAT by Delivery Scenario.** When hospital OAT was delivered for patients not
174 on pre-admission OAT it was most often provided as withdrawal management (n = 834; 44%)
175 and infrequently initiated during hospitalization with linkage to care upon discharge (n = 203;
176 11%). For patients on pre-admission OAT, it was most often delivered as a sustained medication
177 (n = 722; 38%)—OAT received before, during, and after admission—and less often continued
178 during admission, but with subsequent discontinuation after discharge (n = 140; 8%). See Table
179 2 for additional details on patient and admission-related characteristics and pharmacotherapy.

180 **System-Wide OAT Delivery.** Across the 109 VHA hospitals, the median OAT delivery
181 frequency during admission was 11% (SD: 0.10; range 0% to 43%). The data had a non-normal
182 distribution skewed towards less OAT delivery, see Figure 2. The frequency of OAT delivery
183 scenario in each hospital varied. For example, two hospitals did not provide any OAT, and
184 nearly half of hospitals (48%, n = 52) did not have a single admission in which OAT was initiated
185 with linkage to care (range 0 to 16 admissions). Measures of variation (ICC) are reported in
186 Appendix Table 3.

187

188

189 **Hospital and Patient-Level Associations with OAT Receipt**

190 **Patient-Level Covariates.** In the fully specified model, 13 covariates were associated
191 with hospital OAT receipt. Six covariates increased the odds of receiving OAT during
192 hospitalization: pre-admission OAT receipt (AOR 15.3; 95% CI [13.2, 17.7]); an OUD diagnosis or
193 OUD-related infection during admission (AOR 2.30; 95% CI [1.99, 2.66]); male gender (AOR
194 1.52; 95% CI [1.16, 2.01]); receipt of adjuvant medication for opioid withdrawal during
195 admission (AOR 1.52; 95% CI [1.32, 1.75]); an opioid withdrawal diagnosis (AOR 1.47; 95% CI
196 [1.12, 1.92]); and an increased length of hospital stay (AOR 1.04; 95% CI [1.03, 1.05]). Seven
197 covariates were associated with decreased odds of OAT receipt: the receipt of pre-admission
198 naltrexone (AOR 0.26; 95% CI [0.12, 0.56]); an unintentional overdose diagnosis (AOR: 0.29;
199 95% CI [0.16, 0.52]); the receipt of admission naltrexone (AOR 0.31; 95% CI [0.14, 0.66]); pre-
200 admission non-OAT opioid receipt (AOR 0.49; 95% CI [0.41, 0.58]); non-OAT opioid receipt
201 during admission (AOR 0.53; 95 CI [0.46, 0.61]); surgical service receipt during admission (AOR
202 0.75; 95 CI [0.57, 0.99]); and having a co-occurring SUD diagnosis (AOR: 0.77; 95% CI [0.67,
203 0.88]). See Appendix Table 4.

204 **Hospital-Level Covariates.** Four hospital-level covariates were associated with hospital
205 OAT receipt. Patients admitted to large (AOR 2.04; 95% CI [1.39, 3.00]) and medium-sized
206 hospitals (AOR 1.90; 95% CI [1.33, 2.70]) had increased odds of OAT receipt compared with
207 small hospitals. Patients admitted to hospitals located in the northeast (AOR 1.80; 95% CI [1.30,
208 2.49]) and west (AOR 1.62; 95% CI [1.19, 2.22]) had increased odds of OAT receipt compared
209 with those in the south. See Table 3 for the fully-specified model output.

232 including for patients who are undergoing surgical procedures.^{6,31} It is possible that evolving
233 practice recommendations were not reflected in our sample. Anesthesiologists may
234 recommend buprenorphine discontinuation prior to surgery. However, only 6% of our cohort
235 received surgery and only 12% of those patients were on OAT prior to admission; thus, it is
236 unlikely that this is driving observed findings. Moreover, OAT discontinuation during admission
237 may reflect challenges related to care transitions.²⁰

238 Previous research in the VHA describes system wide-variation in OUD-related
239 pharmacotherapy delivery, which ranged from 2% to 76% of qualified patients per facility.¹⁵
240 That analysis, however, did not examine variation specifically for hospital admissions. Our study
241 aligns with and builds upon these prior findings. We observed OAT delivery frequency per
242 hospital ranging from 0% to 43% of qualified admissions.

243 Prior VHA research suggests that specific patient characteristics are positively associated
244 with OAT receipt including male gender, age 56 years or older, and those without a co-
245 occurring mental health diagnosis.³² Gender disparities in SUD treatment and engagement have
246 been described in other care delivery settings.³³ Our study builds upon these findings,
247 suggesting that women-identified patients may be less likely to receive OAT during
248 hospitalization. Associations from this study also suggest that outpatient OAT preceding
249 hospitalization influences subsequent hospital OAT delivery, highlighting the importance of OAT
250 engagement prior to admission. Further, specific care received during admission decreased OAT
251 receipt; for example, patients who received non-OAT opioids or surgical procedures were less
252 likely to receive OAT during hospitalization. These two clinical scenarios should not influence
253 hospital OAT administration. Finally, immutable hospital characteristics (e.g., size and location)

254 influenced OAT delivery, and may reflect unmeasurable internal hospital attributes (e.g.,
255 resources or culture).²⁰ These findings could also reflect the contribution of elements outside
256 the hospital, for example, local beliefs about addiction and availability of community-based
257 treatment resources.²⁰

258 **Study Limitations**

259 This is an observational, unmatched, retrospective cohort study; thus, causal
260 relationships cannot be established. There are limitations to the generalizability of study
261 findings because of the cohort (Veterans, older, white, mostly men) and the health system
262 setting (VHA); however, given that the VHA is an integrated health system that has prioritized
263 OAT delivery, it is possible that VHA OAT delivery outperforms non-VHA hospitals. We elected
264 to include patients with an OUD diagnosis in the prior year, not just patients with an admission
265 diagnosis; thus, for 80% of patients OUD was not the primary reason for hospitalization. The
266 pragmatic study sample selection may be seen as a limitation, but we believe reflects the
267 realities of acute care delivery for patients hospitalized with complications related to OUD and
268 other chronic illnesses. Patients in our cohort may have been misclassified with an OUD
269 diagnosis and thus were not valid OAT candidates. The challenges of using diagnosis-based
270 denominators for cross-facility comparisons are discussed elsewhere.³⁴ Conversely, OUD is also
271 underdiagnosed and eligible patients may have been inadvertently excluded. Further, our study
272 only includes VHA pharmacotherapy data; thus, it is possible that patients received OAT after
273 discharge at a non-VHA facility. However, this is unlikely to significantly influence our results
274 because there were only six cases with post-admission non-VHA OAT receipt in the original data
275 extraction. Another study limitation was our inability to discern why OAT was not delivered

276 (e.g., patients may have declined OAT). Finally, the study data are from 2017, a specific moment
277 in time that does not capture potential changes in practice over time.

278 **Implications for Practice, Research, and Policy**

279 The findings from this study may motivate practice improvement, future research, and
280 inform policy to increase hospital-based OAT delivery in the midst of the opioid-related
281 overdose crisis.

282 **Practice Improvement.** National authorities recommend OAT continuation or initiation
283 in the hospital⁶ and a National Academies of Science, Engineering, & Medicine consensus report
284 concluded that: “Withholding or failing to have available all classes of FDA-approved
285 medication for the treatment of opioid use disorder in any care or criminal justice setting is
286 denying appropriate medical treatment”(p.3).³⁰ Further, hospitalization is a reachable moment
287 for treatment initiation and engagement.^{35,36} Unfortunately, our study suggests that hospital
288 OAT delivery frequency may be far from optimal. Current practice is not only a missed
289 opportunity for treatment engagement, but may also cause harm by disrupting life-saving care.

290 A recent systematic review suggests that the provision of addiction-related services for
291 hospitalized patients with OUD improves patient, provider, and health care outcomes.³⁷
292 Interventions to improve OAT delivery may include an organizational intervention—the
293 addiction consult service (ACS), which provides clinical, educational, and policy-based addiction
294 services and programming in the hospital.³⁸ ACSs, however, are unlikely to be available or
295 feasible across all hospitals. Further, it is likely that many hospital providers have limited
296 addiction training³⁹ and are less confident in providing OAT and delivering other OUD-related
297 services. To address this issue, the VHA and other national hospital authorities could publish

298 specific guidance promoting evidence-based addictions hospital care⁴⁰ or create educational
299 campaigns encouraging hospital-based OAT delivery. These initiatives would likely need to
300 address provider knowledge gaps and addiction-related stigma,^{20,41} describe pathways to OAT
301 after discharge, and identify policies impeding care inside and outside the hospital-setting.²⁰

302 **Future Research.** Research should explore barriers to OAT initiation during
303 hospitalization at the VHA, and reasons for practice variation at patient, hospital, and system
304 levels. Given the VHA's prioritization of OUD treatment, it is possible that the VHA may be
305 outperforming non-VHA hospitals. Future research may confirm this impression. Policymakers
306 and researchers need to consider data access issues. One of the primary challenges to studying
307 hospital OAT delivery is the widespread use of diagnosis-related groupings (DRG) in hospital
308 billing. DRG allows hospitals to bill payers through a bundled payment algorithm to account for
309 illness acuity.⁴² Study replication using Medicaid claims data, for example, is not feasible
310 because most admission-related medications are not captured in the bundled claims data.

311 **Policy Interventions.** The VHA has already mandated national standards to enhance
312 services for patients with OUD. Additional policy interventions outside the VHA may be
313 warranted. Policies requiring all hospitals to offer OAT could be leveraged through hospital-
314 related accrediting bodies (e.g., the Joint Commission). At present, there are no accreditation
315 requirements related to hospital care for persons with OUD and SUDs. It is within the authority
316 of the Joint Commission to require reporting and performance measurement for OAT and to
317 mandate addiction-related technologies for hospital accreditation (e.g., presence of addiction
318 physicians or ACS). Another approach is local legislation. In August 2018, the Massachusetts
319 legislature passed House Bill 4866, *Prevention and Access to Appropriate Care and Treatment of*

320 *Addiction*,⁴³ which requires Massachusetts' emergency departments to offer OAT for patients
321 with an opioid overdose and to link them to outpatient services.⁴³ Similar policies could be
322 created for inpatient service delivery. Finally, there is interest in reforming restrictive federal
323 OAT policies, specifically, to abolish buprenorphine x-waiver requirements.⁴⁴

324 **Conclusions**

325 In a retrospective, unmatched pragmatic VHA patient cohort, hospital OAT delivery
326 varied widely, was infrequently delivered, and was most commonly administered as a
327 continued outpatient medication or for withdrawal management. These findings are the first
328 multisite description of hospital OAT delivery and reveal characteristics that require further
329 exploration to understand how to increase OAT access to patients hospitalized with OUD.

330 **Acknowledgements**

331 **Contributors:** Dr. Priest's dissertation committee.

332 **Funders:** National Institute on Drug Abuse (F30 DA044700, R33 DA035640, UG1 DA015815), the
333 Greenlick Family Scholarship Fund, and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
334 Health Services Research & Development (IK2HX001516). Funding organizations were not
335 involved in the design of the study, data collection, data analysis, the interpretation of data, or
336 writing of the manuscript. The contents of the manuscript are those of the authors and do not
337 represent the views of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the U.S. Government.

338 **Prior Presentations:** Dr. Priest's dissertation defense (February 2019); AMERSA's Annual
339 Conference (November 2019); and OHSU Family Medicine Grand Rounds (November 2019).

340 **Conflicts of Interest**

341 Dr. Lovejoy reports grants from VA Health Services Research & Development during the
342 conduct of the study and grants from National Institutes of Health outside the submitted work.

343 Dr. Priest reports grants from National Institutes of Health and the Greenlick Family Scholarship
344 Fund during the conduct of the study. Drs. Englander, McCarty, and Shull have nothing to
345 disclose.

346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372

References

1. Weiss AJ, Elixhauser A, Barret ML, Steiner CA, Bailey MK, O'Malley L. *HCUP statistical brief #219: Opioid-related inpatient stays and emergency department visits by state, 2009–2014*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality;2016.
2. Peterson C, Liu Y, Xu L, Nataraj N, Zhang K, Mikosz CA. US National 90-Day Readmissions After Opioid Overdose Discharge. *Am J Prev Med*. 2019. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2018.12.003.
3. Ronan MV, Herzig SJ. Hospitalizations related to opioid abuse/dependence and associated serious infections increased sharply, 2002-12. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2016;35(5):832-837. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2015.1424.
4. Weiss AJ, Heslin KC. *HCUP statistical brief #239: Payers of opioid-related inpatient stays and emergency department visits nationally and by state, 2010 and 2015*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality;2018.
5. Weiss AJ, Elixhauser A. *HCUP statistical brief #180: Overview of hospital stays in the United States, 2012*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality;2014.
6. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Treatment Improvement Protocol 63: Medications for opioid use disorder*. 2018.
7. Rosenthal ES, Karchmer AW, Theisen-Toupal J, Castillo RA, Rowley CF. Suboptimal addiction interventions for patients hospitalized with injection drug use-associated infective endocarditis. *Am J Med*. 2015;129(5):481-485. doi: 10.1016/j.amjmed.2015.09.024.
8. Naeger S, Ali MM, Mutter R, Mark T, Hughey L. Prescriptions filled following an opioid-related hospitalization. *Psychiatr Serv*. 2016;67(11):1262-1264. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.201500538.
9. Liebschutz JM, Crooks D, Herman D, et al. Buprenorphine treatment for hospitalized, opioid-dependent patients: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Internal Medicine*. 2014;174(8):1369-1376. doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2014.2556.

- 373 10. Trowbridge P, Weinstein ZM, Kerensky T, et al. Addiction consultation services – Linking
374 hospitalized patients to outpatient addiction treatment. *J Subst Abuse Treat.* 2017;79:1-
375 5. doi: 10.1016/j.jsat.2017.05.007.
- 376 11. Moreno JL, Wakeman SE, Duprey MS, Roberts RJ, Jacobson JS, Devlin JW. Predictors for
377 30-day and 90-day hospital readmission among patients with opioid use disorder. *J*
378 *Addict Med.* 2019. doi: 10.1097/ADM.0000000000000499.
- 379 12. Englander H, Dobbertin K, Lind BK, et al. Inpatient addiction medicine consultation and
380 post-hospital substance use disorder treatment engagement: A propensity matched
381 analysis. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2019;34(12). doi: 10.1007/s11606-019-05251-9.
- 382 13. Bohnert AS, Ilgen MA, Galea S, McCarthy JF, Blow FC. Accidental poisoning mortality
383 among patients in the Department of Veterans Affairs Health System. *Med Care.*
384 2011;49(4):393-396. doi: 10.1097/MLR.0b013e318202aa27.
- 385 14. Oliva EM, Trafton JA, Harris AH, Gordon AJ. Trends in opioid agonist therapy in the
386 Veterans Health Administration: Is supply keeping up with demand? *Am J Drug Alcohol*
387 *Abuse.* 2013;39(2):103-107. doi: 10.3109/00952990.2012.741167.
- 388 15. Finlay AK, Binswanger IA, Timko C, et al. Facility-level changes in receipt of
389 pharmacotherapy for opioid use disorder: Implications for implementation science. *J*
390 *Subst Abuse Treat.* 2018;95:43-47. doi: 10.1016/j.jsat.2018.09.006.
- 391 16. Wyse JJ, Gordon AJ, Dobscha SK, et al. Medications for opioid use disorder in the
392 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system: Historical perspective, lessons
393 learned, and next steps. *Substance abuse.* 2018;39(2):139-144. doi:
394 10.1080/08897077.2018.1452327.
- 395 17. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. VA/DoD clinical practice guidelines: Management
396 of substance use disorder (SUD). 2017;
397 <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/mh/sud/>. Accessed 2/9/2020.
- 398 18. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Beta Elixhauser Comorbidity Software for
399 ICD-10-CM. 2018; [https://www.hcup-](https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/toolssoftware/comorbidityicd10/comorbidity_icd10.jsp#description)
400 [us.ahrq.gov/toolssoftware/comorbidityicd10/comorbidity_icd10.jsp#description](https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/toolssoftware/comorbidityicd10/comorbidity_icd10.jsp#description).
401 Accessed 2/9/2020.

- 402 19. Priest KC. Hospital-based services for opioid use disorder: A study of supply-side
403 attributes. *Dissertations and Theses*. 2019;Paper 4829. doi:
404 https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds/4829
- 405 20. Priest KC, Englander H, McCarty D. "Now hospital leaders are paying attention": A
406 qualitative study of internal and external factors influencing addiction consult services. *J*
407 *Subst Abuse Treat*. 2020;110:59-65. doi: 10.1016/j.jsat.2019.12.003.
- 408 21. *RStudio: Integrated development for R*. [computer program]. Boston, MA RStudio, Inc.;
409 2015.
- 410 22. *Car* [computer program]. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications; 2011.
- 411 23. *Dunn.test: Dunn's Test of multiple comparisons using rank sums* [computer program].
412 2017.
- 413 24. *icd: Comorbidity calculations and tools for ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes* [computer program].
414 2018.
- 415 25. Wickham H. plyr: The split-apply-combine strategy for data analysis. *Journal of*
416 *Statistical Software*. 2011;40(1). doi: 10.18637/jss.v040.i01
- 417 26. *Psych: Procedures for personality and psychological research* [computer program].
418 Evanston, IL: Northwestern University; 2018.
- 419 27. *tidyverse: Easily install and load the 'Tidyverse'*. [computer program]. 2017.
- 420 28. *Stata Statistical Software: Release 15* [computer program]. College Station, TX:
421 StataCorp LLC; 2017.
- 422 29. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. *VHA opioid taper decision tool*. 2016.
- 423 30. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *Medications for Opioid Use*
424 *Disorder Save Lives*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2019.
- 425 31. Haber L, D'eFries T, Martin M. Things We Do for No Reason™: Discontinuing
426 Buprenorphine When Treating Acute Pain. *J Hosp Med*. 2019;14(10):633. doi:
427 10.12788/jhm.3265.
- 428 32. Oliva EM, Harris AHS, Trafton JA, Gordon AJ. Receipt of opioid agonist treatment in the
429 Veterans Health Administration: Facility and patient factors. *Drug Alcohol Depend*.
430 2012;122(3):241-246. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2011.10.004.

- 431 33. Lind BK, McCarty D, Gu Y, Baker R, McConnell JK. Predictors of substance use treatment
432 initiation and engagement among adult and adolescent Medicaid recipients. *Substance*
433 *abuse*. 2019;1-7. doi: 10.1080/08897077.2018.1550467.
- 434 34. Harris AHS, Rubinsky AD, Hoggatt KJ. Possible alternatives to diagnosis-based
435 denominators for addiction treatment quality measures. *J Subst Abuse Treat*.
436 2015;58:62-66. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2015.06.004>.
- 437 35. Englander H, Weimer M, Solotaroff R, et al. Planning and designing the Improving
438 Addiction Care Team (IMPACT) for hospitalized adults with substance use disorder. *J*
439 *Hosp Med*. 2017;12(5):339-342. doi: 10.12788/jhm.2736.
- 440 36. Velez CM, Nicolaidis C, Korthis PT, Englander H. "It's been an experience, a life learning
441 experience": A qualitative study of hospitalized patients with substance use disorders. *J*
442 *Gen Intern Med*. 2017;32(3):296-303. doi: 10.1007/s11606-016-3919-4.
- 443 37. Weimer M, Morford K, Donroe J. Treatment of opioid use disorder in the acute hospital
444 setting: A critical review of the literature (2014–2019). *Current Addiction Reports*.
445 2019;1-16. doi: 10.1007/s40429-019-00267-x.
- 446 38. Priest KC, McCarty D. Role of the hospital in the 21st Century opioid overdose epidemic:
447 The addiction medicine consult service. *J Addict Med*. 2019;Mar/Apr 13(2):104–112. doi:
448 10.1097/ADM.0000000000000496.
- 449 39. Englander H, Collins D, Perry SP, Rabinowitz M, Phoutrides E, Nicolaidis C. "We've
450 learned it's a medical illness, not a moral choice": Qualitative study of the effects of a
451 multicomponent addiction intervention on hospital providers' attitudes and
452 experiences. *J Hosp Med*. 2018;13(11):752-758. doi: 10.12788/jhm.2993.
- 453 40. Englander H, Priest KC, Snyder H, Martin M, Calcaterra S, Gregg J. A call to action:
454 Hospitalists' role in addressing substance use disorder. *J Hosp Med*. 2019;Online
455 October 2019. doi: 10.12788/jhm.3311.
- 456 41. Ashford RD, Brown AM, McDaniel J, Curtis B. Biased labels: An experimental study of
457 language and stigma among individuals in recovery and health professionals. *Substance*
458 *use & misuse*. 2019;1-9. doi: 10.1080/10826084.2019.1581221.

- 459 42. Quinn K. New directions in Medicaid payment for hospital care. *Health Aff (Millwood)*.
460 2008;27(1):269-280. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.27.1.269.
- 461 43. WBUR News & Wire Services. Lawmakers send opioid bill to Baker's desk. 2018;
462 <https://www.wbur.org/commonhealth/2018/08/01/opioid-legislation-to-governor>.
463 Accessed 2/9/2020.
- 464 44. Fiscella K, Wakeman SE, Beletsky L. Buprenorphine deregulation and mainstreaming
465 treatment for opioid use disorder: X the X waiver. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2019;76(3):229-230.
466 doi:
467

468

Table and Figure Legends

469 **Table 1.** Hospital OAT Delivery by Scenario

470

471 **Table 2.** Patient, Admission, and Hospital Characteristics

472

473 **Table 3.** Multilevel Logistic Regression Model: Hospital OAT Delivery

474

475 **Figure 1.** Study Sample Selection

476

477 **Figure 2.** Hospital OAT Delivery Relative Frequency Histogram

478

479

480

481

482

483

484

485

486

487

Table 1. Hospital OAT Delivery by Scenario

Variable	Pharmacotherapy
Any OAT Received	Any OAT received during admission
OAT Continuation	OAT received during pre-admission and admission, but not post-admission
OAT Initiation & Linkage to Care	OAT received during admission and post-admission, but not pre-admission
OAT Sustained	OAT received pre-admission, during admission and post-admission
OAT Withdrawal	OAT received during admission, but not pre or post-admission

Table Notes. OAT = opioid agonist therapy; Pre-Admission OAT: VHA OTP visit or Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes (H0033; J0574; J0575; J0571; S0109) or outpatient buprenorphine filled prescriptions: buprenorphine film buccal; buprenorphine sublingual tablet; buprenorphine/naloxone film sublingual; buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual tablet; Admission OAT: VHA OTP visit or HCPCS codes (H0033; J0571; S0109) or any formulation of buprenorphine or methadone administered: buprenorphine sublingual tablet; buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual film; buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual tablet; buprenorphine injection; buprenorphine patch; methadone injection; methadone solution concentrate; methadone solution oral; methadone tablet; methadone tablet effervescent; and methadone unknown formulation; Post-admission OAT: VHA OTP visit or HCPCS codes (H0033; J0574; J0575; J0571; S0109) or outpatient buprenorphine filled prescriptions: buprenorphine film buccal; buprenorphine sublingual tablet; buprenorphine/naloxone film sublingual; and buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual tablet.

489

490

491

492

493

494

495

496

497

498

499

500

501

Table 2. Patient, Admission, and Hospital Characteristics

Variable	Frequency % Count
Patient Characteristics (n = 12,407)	
Age	Median 61; Mean 58.5 Range 21 to 90
Gender	
Male	93.0% (11,543)
Female	6.8% (864)
Race	
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.2% (147)
Asian	<1% (43)
Black or African American	21.8% (2,706)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	< 1% (106)
White	71.6% (8,880)
Unknown/Declined to Answer	4.2% (525)
Ethnicity	
Hispanic or Latino	4.8% (595)
Non-Hispanic or Latino	92.5% (11,476)
Unknown	2.7% (336)
Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnosis	65.2% (8,094)
Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis	48.6% (6,024)
Co-Occurring Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Diagnoses	41.0% (5,091)
Admission-Related Characteristics (n = 12,407)	
Length of Stay	Median, 5; Mean 6.6 Range 1 to 50
Admission Source	
Outpatient Treatment	49.1% (6,095)
Other Direct Admission	45.3% (5,616)
Other	4.9% (696)
Services Received	
ICU Services	18.6% (2,303)
Surgical Services	6.3% (779)
Acute OUD Infection Diagnosis	5.5% (691)
OUD-Related Diagnosis Primary and/or Secondary	14.9% (1,848)
OUD-Related Diagnosis and/or Acute OUD Infection	20.1% (2,491)
Pre-Admission Pharmacotherapy (n = 12,407)	
No OAT Received	89.3% (11,082)
Pre-Admission OAT^a	
Buprenorphine Only ^b	10.7% (1,325)
Non-Specific Administration ^c	5.0% (625)
>1 Type of OAT Received ^d	4.7% (577)
Methadone Only ^e	<1% (112)
Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled	<1% (11)
Naltrexone Received or Prescription Filled	30.4% (3,766)
Naloxone Prescription Filled	2.0% (244)
	3.8% (477)
Admission Pharmacotherapy (n = 12,407)	
No OAT Received	84.6% (10,493)
Admission OAT^a	
Methadone Only ^e	15.4% (1,914)
Buprenorphine Only ^b	8.5% (1,049)
>1 Type of OAT Received ^d	5.2% (639)
	1.1% (136)

Non-Specific Administration Only ^c	<1% (90)
Any Withdrawal Adjuvants	44.4% (5,502)
First-Line Adjuvant—Clonidine	8.8% (1,089)
Second-Line Adjuvant—Baclofen, Gabapentin/Pregabalin, or Tizanidine	39.3% (4,882)
Both Adjuvants	3.4% (469)
Non-OAT Opioid Received	54.5% (6,765)
Naltrexone Received	1.4% (168)
Post-Admission Pharmacotherapy^f (n = 12, 288)	
No OAT Received	88.4% (10,868)
Post-Admission OAT^a	11.6% (1,420)
Buprenorphine Only ^b	5.2% (633)
Non-Specific Administration Only ^c	5.1% (628)
>1 Type of OAT Received ^d	1.2% (142)
Methadone Only ^e	<1% (17)
Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled	34.6% (4,250)
Naltrexone Received or Prescription Filled	2.8% (341)
Naloxone Prescription Filled	6.2% (765)
Hospital OAT Delivery by Scenario^f (n = 12, 288)	
OAT for Withdrawal Management	6.8% (834)
OAT Sustained	5.9% (722)
OAT Initiated with Linkage to Care	1.7% (203)
OAT Continued	1.2% (140)
Secondary Outcomes	
Left Hospital Against Medical Advice ^f	5.7% (701)
In-Hospital Mortality	1.0% (119)
Pre-OAT Received	<1% (6)
Pre-OAT Not Received	1.0% (113)
Death within 30 Days of Discharge ^f	<1% (110)
Emergency Department Visit within 30 Days of Discharge ^f	27.9% (3,434)
Hospital Readmission within 30 Days of Discharge ^f	13.3% (1,630)
Hospital Characteristics (n = 109)	
Hospital Size	
Small: 1 to 49 beds	25.7% (28)
Medium: 50 to 99 beds	33.0% (36)
Large: ≥100 beds	41.3% (45)
Hospital Region	
Midwest	22.9% (25)
Northeast	16.5% (18)
South	39.4% (43)
West	21.1% (23)
Admission Volume	Median 98; Mean 114 Range 26 to 430; IQR 97
Acute OUD Relative Volume	Median 32% Range 13% to 83%

Table Notes. ICU = intensive care unit; OUD = opioid use disorder; OAT = opioid agonist therapy; IQR = interquartile range; ^aIncludes each of the 4 sub-categories in this table; ^bIncludes buprenorphine prescription fills and the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes J0574, J0575, J0571; ^cIncludes an OTP stop code visit or the non-specific OAT administration HCPCS code H0033; ^dIncludes any patients who received more than one type of OAT during the pre-period; ^eIncludes the methadone specific HCPCS code S0109; ^fPercentage and count excludes 119 inpatient deaths (n = 12, 288); If a medication was used more than once in a study period, it was only counted once.

Table 3. Multilevel Logistic Regression Model: Hospital OAT Delivery

Parameters	B	SE	AOR	95% CI	
Intercept	-2.78***	0.00	0.04	0.03	0.13
Patient-Level Covariates					
Age	0.00	0.08	1.00	1.00	1.01
Gender: Male (ref. Female)	0.42**	0.18	1.52	1.16	2.01
Race: Non-white (ref. White)	-0.05	0.14	0.95	0.82	1.11
Race: Unknown (ref. White)	-0.18	0.21	0.84	0.59	1.19
Ethnicity: Hispanic (ref. Non-Hispanic)	0.02	0.07	1.02	0.77	1.34
Ethnicity: Unknown (ref. Non-Hispanic)	0.17	0.07	1.2-	0.80	1.81
Acute OUD Diagnosis/Infection	0.83***	0.07	2.30	1.99	2.66
Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis	-0.26***	0.30	0.77	0.67	0.88
Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnosis	-0.04	0.14	0.97	0.84	1.11
Unintentional Overdose Diagnosis During Admission	-1.24***	0.00	0.29	0.16	0.52
Opioid Withdrawal Diagnosis During Admission	0.38**	0.08	1.47	1.12	1.92
Hospital Length of Stay	0.04***	0.14	1.04	1.03	1.05
ICU Services Received During Admission	-0.13	0.14	0.88	0.74	1.03
Surgical Services Received During Admission	-0.29*	0.08	0.75	0.57	0.99
Pre-Admission OAT Received	2.73***	0.12	15.3	13.1	17.7
Pre-Admission Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled	-0.72***	0.38	0.49	0.41	0.58
Pre-Admission Benzodiazepine Prescription Filled	0.03	0.08	1.03	0.81	1.32
Pre-Admission Naltrexone Received or Prescription Filled	-1.33***	0.00	0.26	0.12	0.56
Pre-Admission Gabapentin/Pregabalin Prescription Filled	-0.12	0.14	0.89	0.77	1.04
Admission Source: Other (ref. Outpatient)	-0.13	0.07	0.88	0.66	1.16
Admission Source: Direct (ref. Outpatient)	-0.01	0.07	0.99	0.85	1.15
During Admission Non-OAT Opioid Received	-0.64***	0.07	0.53	0.46	0.61
During Admission Adjuvant Received	0.42***	0.39	1.52	1.32	1.75
During Admission Benzodiazepine Received	-0.08	0.08	0.92	0.80	1.06
During Admission Naltrexone Received	-1.17**	0.09	0.31	0.14	0.66
Hospital-Level Covariates					
Acute OUD Diagnoses Volume ^a	-0.02**	0.01	0.98	0.97	0.99
Hospital Size: Medium (ref. Small)	0.64***	0.18	1.90	1.33	2.70
Hospital Size: Large (ref. Small)	0.71***	0.20	2.04	1.39	3.00
Census Region: Midwest (ref. South)	0.24	0.16	1.27	0.93	1.72
Census Region: Northeast (ref. South)	0.59***	0.17	1.80	1.30	2.49
Census Region: West (ref. South)	0.48**	0.16	1.62	1.19	2.22
Admission Volume	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Table Notes. Bold indicates statistical significance; $p < 0.05^*$; $p < 0.01^{**}$; $p < 0.001^{***}$; ^aThis relatively small effect size likely has little practical relevance, thus, was omitted from the manuscript text.

503

504

505

506

507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518

519

520

521

522

523

524

525

526

527

528

529

530

531

532

533

Appendices

Appendix Table 1: Study Variable Definition

Appendix Table 2: Model Covariates

Appendix Table 3: Testing for Variation in Hospital OAT Delivery Across the VHA

Appendix Table 4: Logistic Regression Models Testing for Multilevel Characteristic Associations with Hospital OAT Delivery

Appendix Table 5: Sensitivity Analysis: OAT Definition

Appendix Table 1: Study Variable Definitions

Variable	Definition
Patient Demographics	
OUD ICD-10 Codes Queried	F11.10, F11.11, F11.120 F11.121, F11.122, F11.129, F11.14, F11.150, F11.151, F11.159, F11.181, F11.182, F11.188, F11.19, F11.20, F11.220, F11.21, F11.221, F11.222, F11.229, F11.23, F11.24, F11.250, F11.251, F11.259, F11.281, F11.282, F11.288, F11.29, F11.90, F11.920, F11.921, F11.922, F11.929. F11.93, F11.94, F11.950, F11.951, F11.959, F11.981, F11.982, F11.988, F11.99, T40.0X1A, T40.0X1D, T40.0X1S, T40.0X4A, T40.0X4D, T40.0X4S, T40.0X5A, T40.0X5D, T40.0X5S, T40.1X1A, T40.1X1D, T40.1X1S, T40.1X4A, T40.1X4D, T40.1X4S, T40.2X1A, T40.2X1D, T40.2X1S, T40.2X4A, T40.2X4D, T40.2X4S, T40.2X5A, T40.2X5D, T40.2X5S, T40.3X1A, T40.3X1D, T40.3X1S, T40.3X4A, T40.3X4D, T40.3X4S, T40.3X5A, T40.3X5D, T40.3X5S, T40.4X1A, T40.4X1D, T40.4X1S, T40.4X4A, T40.4X4D, T40.4X4S, T40.4X5A, T40.4X5D, T40.4X5S, T40.601A, T40.601D, T40.601S, T40.604A, T40.604D, T40.604S, T40.605A, T40.605D, T40.605S, T40.691A, T40.691D, T40.691S, T40.694A, T40.694D, T40.694S, T40.695A, T40.695D, T40.695S
Age	Age in years present on admission.
Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnosis ¹	Conditions were identified within 365 days prior to the index hospitalization admission date: 1) Adjustment Disorder Other; 2) Anxiety Disorder; 3) Mood Disorder; 4) Non-Mood Psychotic disorder; 5) PTSD; 6) Self-Harm. Could include more than one. <i>Codes available upon request.</i>
Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis ¹	Conditions were identified within 365 days prior to the index hospitalization admission date: 1) Alcohol Use Disorder; 2) Cannabis Use Disorder; 3) Cocaine Use Disorder; 4) Hallucinogen Use Disorder; 5) Nicotine Dependence; 6) Other Psychoactive Use Disorders; 7) Other Stimulant Related Disorders; 8) Other Substance Use Disorder; 9) Sedative Hypnotic Disorders. Could include more than one. <i>Codes available upon request.</i>
Gender	Male or Female.
Ethnicity	1) Not Hispanic or Latino; 2) Hispanic or Latino; 3) Unknown.
OUD-Related Diagnosis ²	Primary or secondary ICD-10 OUD admission diagnosis codes. <i>Codes available upon request.</i>
OUD-Related Infections ²	Primary or secondary ICD-10 OUD admission diagnosis codes: 1) Endocarditis; 2) Candida Endocarditis; 3) Osteomyelitis; 4) Bacteremia; 5) Discitis; 6) Septic Arthritis; 7) Brain Abscess; 8) Joint Infection; 9) Necrotizing Fasciitis; 10) Empyema; and 11) Lung Abscess. <i>Codes available upon request.</i>
OUD-Related Diagnosis or Infection	Combined variable: OUD-Related Diagnosis or OUD-Related Infection Diagnosis.
Primary Diagnosis ²	The primary ICD-10 admission diagnosis code for index hospitalization.
Race	1) American Indian or Alaska Native; 2) Asian; 3) Black or African American; 4) White; 5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; 6) Unknown/Decline to Answer.
Secondary Diagnosis ²	The secondary ICD-10 admission diagnosis code for index hospitalization.
Admission Source	Point of admission for the index hospitalization: 1) Outpatient Treatment; 2) Other Direct Admission; 3) Other.
Intensive Care Unit Service	Use of intensive care unit services during index hospitalization.
Length of Stay	Length of time (days) of the index hospitalization.
Surgical Service	Use of surgical services during index hospitalization.
Pharmacotherapy	
Pre-Admission	

Benzodiazepine	Prescription filled for any benzodiazepine.
Gabapentin/Pregabalin	Prescription filled for gabapentin and/or pregabalin.
Naloxone	Prescription filled for naloxone.
Naltrexone	Prescription filled or HCPCS code for naltrexone.
Opioid	Prescription filled for any non-OAT opioids, not including methadone or buprenorphine.
Admission³	
Benzodiazepine	Administration of benzodiazepine.
Gabapentin/Pregabalin	Administration of gabapentin and/or pregabalin.
Naltrexone	Administration of naltrexone.
Opioid	Administration of any non-OAT opioid, did not include methadone or buprenorphine formulations for pain.
First-Line Withdrawal Adjuvant	Administration of clonidine.
Second-Line Withdrawal Adjuvant ⁴	Administration of any second-line adjuvant: baclofen or gabapentin or pregabalin or tizanidine. Could include more than one.
Any Withdrawal Adjuvants	Administration of any of the adjuvants: baclofen or clonidine or gabapentin or pregabalin or tizanidine. Could include more than one.
Both Adjuvants	Administration of both first-line and second-line withdrawal adjuvants.
Post-Admission	
Benzodiazepine	Prescription filled for any benzodiazepine.
Gabapentin/Pregabalin	Prescription filled for gabapentin and/or pregabalin.
Naloxone	Prescription filled for naloxone.
Naltrexone	Prescription filled or HCPCS code for naltrexone.
Secondary Outcomes	
In-Hospital Mortality	Death during index admission
Left Against Medical Advice	Leaving against medical advice during admission, collapsed VHA internal codes.
Death	Death within the post-admission time period.
Emergency Department Visit	VHA emergency department visit within the post-admission time period.
Hospital Readmission	VHA acute medical admission within the post-admission time period.
Hospital Characteristics	
Acute OUD Diagnosis Volume	The proportion of index admissions in a facility with an acute OUD diagnosis (OUD-infection or OUD diagnosis).
Admission Volume	The number of admissions in a facility.
Hospital Region	U.S. Census categories: 1) Northeast; 2) Midwest; 3) South; 4) West.
Hospital Size	1) Small: 1 to 49 beds; 2) Medium: 50 to 99 beds; 3) Large: ≥ 100.

Table Notes. ¹Present on admission = identified within prior 365 days; ²Occurred during admission; ³During admission < 1% of pharmaceutical data points were prescribed; ⁴Second line adjuvants are medications recommended for use by VHA Opioid Taper Tool; HCPCS = Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System is a specific procedure billing code for medication administration.

535
536
537
538
539
540
541

Appendix Table 2: Model Covariates

Level 1: Patient and Admission Characteristics	Level 2: Hospital Characteristics
Demographics	
1. Age (<i>continuous</i>)	1. Admission Volume (<i>continuous</i>)
2. Male (<i>ref. Female</i>)	2. Acute OUD Diagnoses Relative Volume (<i>continuous</i>)
3. Race: Non-white (<i>ref. White</i>)	3. Hospital Size: Medium (<i>ref. Small</i>)
4. Race: Unknown (<i>ref. White</i>)	4. Hospital Size: Large (<i>ref. Small</i>)
5. Ethnicity: Hispanic (<i>ref. Non-Hispanic</i>)	5. Census Region: Midwest (<i>ref. South</i>)
6. Ethnicity: Unknown (<i>ref. Non-Hispanic</i>)	6. Census Region: Northeast (<i>ref. South</i>)
7. Acute OUD Diagnosis/Infection (<i>yes/no</i>)	7. Census Region: West (<i>ref. South</i>)
8. Co-occurring Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis (<i>yes/no</i>)	
9. Co-occurring Mental Health Diagnosis (<i>yes/no</i>)	
Admission	
10. Unintentional Overdose Diagnosis (<i>yes/no</i>)	
11. Opioid Withdrawal Diagnosis (<i>yes/no</i>)	
12. Length of Stay (<i>continuous</i>)	
13. ICU Services Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
14. Surgical Services Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
15. Admission Source: Other (<i>ref. Outpatient</i>)	
16. Admission Source: Direct (<i>ref. Outpatient</i>)	
17. Opioid Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
18. Adjuvant Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
19. Benzodiazepine Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
20. Naltrexone Received (<i>yes/no</i>)	
Pre-Admission	
21. OAT Received or Prescription Filled (<i>yes/no</i>)	
22. Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled (<i>yes/no</i>)	
23. Benzodiazepine Prescription Filled (<i>yes/no</i>)	
24. Naltrexone Received or Prescription Filled (<i>yes/no</i>)	
25. Gabapentin/Pregabalin Prescription Filled (<i>yes/no</i>)	

543
 544
 545
 546
 547
 548
 549
 550
 551
 552
 553
 554
 555
 556
 557
 558
 559
 560
 561

Appendix Table 3: Testing for Variation in Hospital OAT Delivery Across the VHA

	<i>Model 1: Without Covariates</i>			<i>Model 2: Patient Covariates</i>			<i>Model 3: Patient and Hospital Covariates</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Constant	0.52	0.09	0.37, 0.72	0.38	0.07	0.26, 0.56	0.02	0.05	0.13, 0.34
ICC	0.14	0.02	0.10, 0.18	0.10	0.18	0.07, 0.14	0.06	0.13	0.04, 0.09

562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613

**Appendix Table 4: Logistic Regression Models Testing for
Multilevel Characteristic Associations with Hospital OAT Delivery**

	<i>Model 2: Patient Covariates</i>					<i>Model 3: Patient/Hospital Covariates</i>				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>95% CI</i>		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
Intercept	-2.79***	0.22	0.06	0.04	0.09	-2.78***	0.00	0.04	0.03	0.13
Patient-Level Covariates										
Age	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.01	0.00	0.08	1.00	1.00	1.01
Gender: Male (ref. Female)	0.42**	0.14	1.52	1.15	2.00	0.42**	0.18	1.52	1.16	2.01
Race: Non-white (ref. White)	-0.07	0.08	0.94	0.80	1.09	-0.05	0.14	0.95	0.82	1.11
Race: Unknown (ref. White)	-0.17	0.18	0.85	0.60	1.20	-0.18	0.21	0.84	0.59	1.19
Ethnicity: Hispanic (ref. Non-Hispanic)	0.06	0.14	1.06	0.80	1.41	0.02	0.07	1.02	0.77	1.34
Ethnicity: Unknown (ref. Non-Hispanic)	0.18	0.21	1.20	0.79	1.80	0.17	0.07	1.2-	0.80	1.81
Acute OUD Diagnosis/Infection	0.83***	0.07	2.30	1.99	2.67	0.83***	0.07	2.30	1.99	2.66
Co-Occurring SUD Diagnosis	-0.26***	0.07	0.77	0.67	0.88	-0.26***	0.30	0.77	0.67	0.88
Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnosis	-0.04	0.07	0.96	0.84	1.11	-0.04	0.14	0.97	0.84	1.11
Unintentional Overdose Diagnosis During Admission	-1.24***	0.30	0.29	0.16	0.52	-1.24***	0.00	0.29	0.16	0.52
Opioid Withdrawal Diagnosis During Admission	0.38**	0.14	1.46	1.12	1.91	0.38**	0.08	1.47	1.12	1.92
Length of Stay	0.04***	0.00	1.04	1.04	1.05	0.04***	0.14	1.04	1.03	1.05
ICU Services Received During Admission	-0.12	0.08	0.88	0.75	1.04	-0.13	0.14	0.88	0.74	1.03
Surgical Services Received During Admission	-0.27	0.14	0.76	0.58	1.00	-0.29*	0.08	0.75	0.57	0.99
Pre-Admission OAT Received	2.73***	0.08	15.3	13.2	17.8	2.73***	0.12	15.3	13.1	17.7
Pre-Admission Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled	-0.72***	0.09	0.49	0.41	0.58	-0.72***	0.38	0.49	0.41	0.58
Pre-Admission Benzodiazepine Prescription Filled	0.04	0.12	1.04	0.81	1.32	0.03	0.08	1.03	0.81	1.32
Pre-Admission Naltrexone Received or Filled	-1.31**	0.38	0.27	0.13	0.57	-1.33***	0.00	0.26	0.12	0.56
Pre-Admission Gabapentin/Pregabalin Prescription Filled	-0.12	0.08	0.89	0.76	1.03	-0.12	0.14	0.89	0.77	1.04
Admission Source: Other (ref. Outpatient)	-0.16	0.14	0.85	0.64	1.12	-0.13	0.07	0.88	0.66	1.16
Admission Source: Direct (ref. Outpatient)	-0.01	0.08	0.99	0.85	1.16	-0.01	0.07	0.99	0.85	1.15
During Admission Non-OAT Opioid Received	-0.63***	0.07	0.53	0.46	0.61	-0.64***	0.07	0.53	0.46	0.61
During Admission Adjuvant Received	0.42***	0.07	1.53	1.33	1.76	0.42***	0.39	1.52	1.32	1.75
During Admission Benzodiazepine Received	-0.11	0.07	0.90	0.78	1.04	-0.08	0.08	0.92	0.80	1.06
During Admission Naltrexone Received	-1.19**	0.39	0.30	0.14	0.65	-1.17**	0.09	0.31	0.14	0.66
Hospital-Level Covariates										
Acute OUD Diagnoses Volume	--	--	--	--	--	-0.02**	0.01	0.98	0.97	0.99
Hospital Size: Medium (ref. Small)	--	--	--	--	--	0.64***	0.18	1.90	1.33	2.70
Hospital Size: Large (ref. Small)	--	--	--	--	--	0.71***	0.20	2.04	1.39	3.00
Census Region: Midwest (ref. South)	--	--	--	--	--	0.24	0.16	1.27	0.93	1.72
Census Region: Northeast (ref. South)	--	--	--	--	--	0.59***	0.17	1.80	1.30	2.49
Census Region: West (ref. South)	--	--	--	--	--	0.48**	0.16	1.62	1.19	2.22
Admission Volume	--	--	--	--	--	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Table Notes. Bold indicates statistical significance; $p < 0.05^*$; $p < 0.01^{**}$; $p < 0.001^{***}$

614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629

630

Appendix Table 5: Sensitivity Analysis: OAT Definition

631 The multilevel model was run using a narrower OAT definition for admission delivery which excluded any
 632 non-FDA approved versions of OAT (i.e., injectable formulations of methadone and buprenorphine).

633

634 **Model 1: The Variance Component Model.** There were no differences observed for the narrower OAT
 635 definition. The coefficient was the same and in the same direction.

636

637 **Model 2: The Intermediate Model with Level 1 Covariates.** There were no differences in the intermediate
 638 model with regards to covariate direction or statistically significant associations, except for the surgical
 639 variable, which was statistically significant in the model presented in the manuscript with the broader OAT
 640 definition.

641

642 **Model 3: The Full Model with Level 1 and Level 2 Covariates.** There were no differences in the final model
 643 with regards to covariate direction or statistically significant associations, except for the surgical services
 644 received variable, which was statistically significant in the model presented in the manuscript with the
 645 broader OAT definition.

Model 3: Narrower OAT Definition

	OR	SE	Z	P	95% CI	
Intercept	0.06	0.0234484	-7.2	0.0000	0.03	0.13
Age	1.00	0.002539	0.12	0.9060	1.00	1.01
Gender: Male (ref. Female)	1.50	0.2121659	2.89	0.0040	1.14	1.98
Race: Non-white (ref. White)	0.95	0.0738042	-0.71	0.4770	0.81	1.10
Race: Unknown (ref. White)	0.84	0.149254	-0.98	0.3260	0.59	1.19
Ethnicity: Hispanic	0.98	0.1419715	-0.11	0.9120	0.74	1.31
Ethnicity: Unknown	1.20	0.24997	0.88	0.3780	0.80	1.81
Acute OUD Diagnosis/Infection	2.30	0.1720454	11.12	0.0000	1.99	2.66
Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis	0.78	0.0543631	-3.59	0.0000	0.68	0.89
Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnosis	0.95	0.0677582	-0.67	0.5050	0.83	1.10
Unintentional Overdose Diagnosis During Admission	0.27	0.0836167	-4.23	0.0000	0.15	0.50
Opioid Withdrawal Diagnosis During Admission	1.51	0.206946	3	0.0030	1.15	1.97
Hospital Length of Stay	1.04	0.0045775	9.69	0.0000	1.03	1.05
ICU Services Received During Admission	0.89	0.0745036	-1.4	0.1610	0.75	1.05
Surgical Services Received During Admission	0.77	0.1058284	-1.93	0.0540	0.58	1.00
Admission Source: Other (ref. Outpatient)	0.88	0.1260072	-0.89	0.3740	0.67	1.17
Admission Source: Direct (ref. Outpatient)	0.98	0.0771065	-0.22	0.8260	0.84	1.15
During Admission Non-OAT Opioid Received	0.54	0.0376208	-8.84	0.0000	0.47	0.62
During Admission Adjuvant Received	1.51	0.1087461	5.79	0.0000	1.32	1.74
During Admission Benzodiazepine Received	0.91	0.06681	-1.29	0.1980	0.79	1.05
During Admission Naltrexone Received	0.31	0.1215771	-2.99	0.0030	0.15	0.67
Pre-Admission OAT Received	15.04	1.143896	35.64	0.0000	12.96	17.46
Pre-Admission Non-OAT Opioid Prescription Filled	0.48	0.0418063	-8.41	0.0000	0.41	0.57
Pre-Admission Benzodiazepine Prescription Filled	0.99	0.1243564	-0.1	0.9180	0.77	1.26
Pre-Admission Naltrexone Received or Prescription Filled	0.27	0.1035082	-3.41	0.0010	0.13	0.57
Pre-Admission Gabapentin/Pregabalin Prescription Filled	0.89	0.0687118	-1.46	0.1440	0.77	1.04
Acute OUD Diagnoses Volume	0.98	0.0069802	-2.49	0.0130	0.97	1.00
Hospital Size Medium (ref. Small)	1.90	0.3410116	3.53	0.0000	1.33	2.69
Hospital Size Large (ref. Small)	1.91	0.3767839	3.26	0.0010	1.29	2.81
Census Region Midwest (ref. South)	1.23	0.1970601	1.47	0.1420	0.93	1.71
Census Region Northeast (ref. South)	1.60	0.2682119	2.81	0.0050	1.15	2.22
Census Region West (ref. South)	1.63	0.2603606	3.04	0.0020	1.19	2.23
Admission Volume	1.00	0.0010102	-1.03	0.3010	1.00	1.00

646

