



Treating Opioid Use Disorder in Primary Care

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Introduction & Background

Thames Valley Family Health Team (TVFHT) is one of the largest Family Health Teams in the province. TVFHT is made up of over 15 physical locations, over 115 primary care physicians, and 110+ interdisciplinary health professionals providing care for over 155,000 patients.

Opioid Use Disorder is a chronic, relapsing disease and is treatable. One-third of Canadians that were polled said they've known someone with Opioid Use Disorder. Furthermore, in 2015, it was estimated that 360,000 Canadians had some dependence on prescription opioids. Recently, there has been an increase of press coverage related to the Opioid Crisis in Ontario. In 2015, over 725 people in the province died of opioid-related causes which is almost 4 times higher than in 1991 (The Star, 2017). Opioid-related deaths have now surpassed motor-vehicle related deaths. Much of the crisis has evolved from the introduction of slow-release analgesic prescriptions for patients with chronic non-malignant pain.

Program Outline

The Opioid Dependency program was originally implemented at our Old South FHO location. This location operates with over 16 physicians and 15 FHT members to provide primary care services to over 21,000 patients. The Opioid Dependency program is spire headed by a passionate physician and nurse dual, providing services to both chronic pain and addiction patients. The program initially started through the Chronic Pain Clinic and has grown to include patients who are suffering strictly from addiction.

The Opioid Dependency program is based on Project HOPE which is systematic approached designed to help primary care teams address the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder directly within the primary care clinic.

Key Points to a Successful Program:

- Opioid Use Disorder is a chronic, relapsing disease like any other chronic disease such as Diabetes, Hypertension, COPD
- It takes one passionate and willing physician or NP to implement a successful Primary Care Opioid Use Disorder Program
- Establish relationships with community pharmacists
- Recognize patients in your practice and get comfortable with asking about opioid use

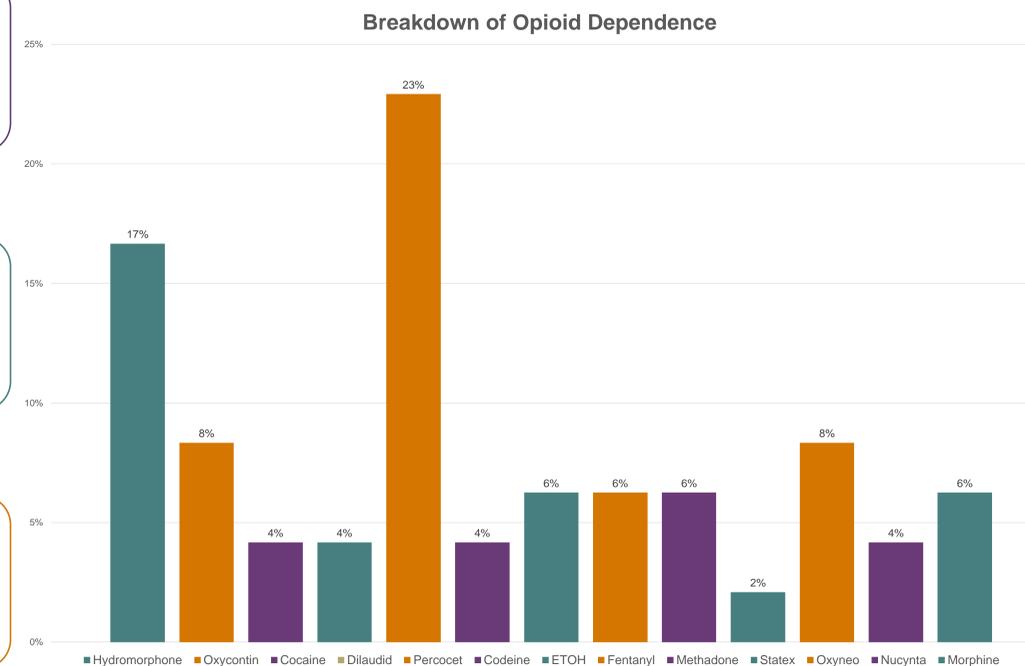
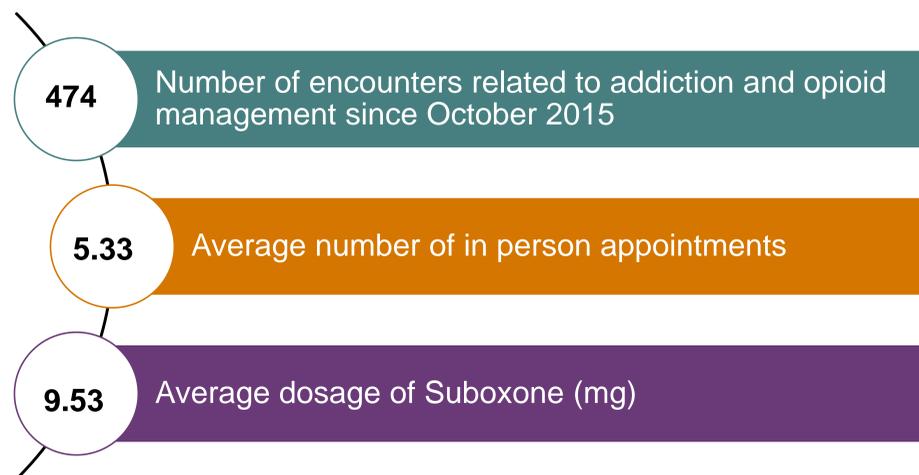


What Patients are Saying about the Program:

"I feel like I have my life back. I actually have money in bank account. I'm surprising my girlfriend with tickets to a concert Saturday night."

"I got a job! I'm going to meetings everyday and I'm going to be a peer councillor."

"I really can't believe the difference in how I feel. I'm more focused, my memory is improved. I'm more involved with my family! The brain fog has lifted!"



Spread and Sustainability

The Opioid Dependency program has now been implemented at three sites across the TVFHT and continues to spark interest of other locations. Project HOPE only takes a dedicated staff team of one physician, one nurse, and a strong relationship with a community pharmacist to be successfully implemented within primary care.