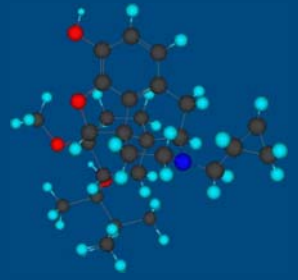


Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative Newsletter

November 2007

A Joint Project of the Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems and Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc.



Welcome to the third edition of the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative (BBI) e-Newsletter. We are pleased to continue reporting on the progress of this important initiative in Baltimore and we hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

Baltimore City Council Hears Testimony on BBI Success

On July 18th, 2007, the three BBI partner agencies, The Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc., and Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc., presented an interim report to Baltimore's City Council on the progress of the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative. Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, the Health Commissioner of Baltimore, presented the findings of the interim report. Dr. Jerry Hunt, a buprenorphine certified primary care provider, Wendy Merrick, the Director of the substance abuse treatment program at Total Health Care, Sadie Matarazzo, the Program Manager of the Substance Abuse Initiatives at Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc., and a patient in recovery testified before the City Council noting the programs tremendous success.

The interim report of the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative included 7 key findings:

1. Through June 30, 2007, 388 patients entered the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative and 65% of clients have remained in treatment for at least 90 days.
2. At least 79% of patients are able to qualify for health insurance for transfer to the medical system. It appears that all but a few patients will eventually obtain the coverage they need to receive buprenorphine from their own doctor.
3. Through June 30, 2007, 62 patients have transferred care to the medical system and only 2 have dropped out in 124 total months of medical care.
4. Two in three patients are continuing to participate in counseling or other supportive treatment after transfer to the medical system.
5. Though June 30, 2007, 93 Physicians have signed up for buprenorphine training in Baltimore and 50 have completed the training.
6. The HIV treatment system is Providing a new source of funding for buprenorphine since Maryland added buprenorphine to its AIDS Drug Assistance Program, and the Baltimore Ryan White Planning Council has made primary care funding contingent on the ability to provide buprenorphine to patients.
7. Evidence is emerging that expanding access to buprenorphine treatment could be cost effective or cost-saving for the medical system.



To view the report in its entirety, please go to http://www.baltimorehealth.org/info/2007_07_18.bupreport.pdf

Buprenorphine Certification Training Courses



Two in person training opportunities coming soon or train online!

American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM) and MedChi's Center for a Healthy Maryland Buprenorphine Training

Saturday, December 8, 2007

7:00am - 5:30pm
(lunch provided)

Location

Embassy Suites Hotel at BWI
1300 Concourse Drive
Linthicum, Maryland

Registration

Register online at www.docoptin.com or call 410-850-0747.

Friday, January 4, 2008

7:00am-5:30pm
(lunch provided)

Location

MedChi

1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Registration

Call Elaine Gisriel at 410-539-0872 ext. 415 or email egisriel@medchi.org

Online Training

Free training on your schedule!

Free online buprenorphine provider training continues for all Baltimore City based providers.

To enroll, please contact Vanessa Kuhn at vkuhn@bsasinc.org or at 410-637-1900 ext. 286. Or register online at <http://www.buprenorphineCME.com/baltimore>

BBI Staffing Updates

In the Spotlight



The Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative welcomes Ms. Tammy Braswell, who has shifted to a full-time treatment liaison for the initiative. She is now in two treatment sites, Total Health Care and Universal Counseling Services, serving over 140 clients. Ms. Braswell has extensive knowledge in the addictions field and has served as an outreach worker for several years at local methadone sites for Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc.

Ms. Braswell is enthusiastically embracing her new role and is excited to help buprenorphine clients through their treatment and assist them in enrolling in health insurance. Ms. Braswell sees the benefits of buprenorphine on a daily basis and is encouraged by how well her clients function on buprenorphine. One of the most important benefits she sees is that buprenorphine allows patients

to control their addiction and to focus their energy on putting other pieces of their lives together, like finding a job or a stable living environment.

All BBI partners welcome Ms. Braswell and wish her the best in her new role as treatment liaison.

Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative Updates

Progress since the last interim report

Since the release of the Interim Report, the BBI has made the following strides:

Through October 31, 2007, 583 patients have entered the Initiative and a total of 106 have been transferred successfully from their substance abuse treatment program to a primary care provider for continued buprenorphine treatment. Once transferred to a primary care provider, patients have an average length of stay in the medical system of 140 days.

Through October 31, 2007, 116 physicians have signed up for the city-sponsored online buprenorphine training. An additional 30 internal medicine residents from Good Samaritan Hospital and from the Johns Hopkins Hospital/Sinai Hospital Program in Internal Medicine are in the process of completing the buprenorphine training as part of their residency curriculum.

BBI in the News!

MedChi report highlights improved access to treatment

MedChi's Center for a Healthy Maryland with the support from the Open Society Institute recently released a report entitled *Improving Patient Access to Buprenorphine Treatment through Physician Offices in Maryland: Summary of Findings, Recommendation, and Action Steps*. The report "examines health plan policies and procedures for treating drug addiction and the experiences of physicians in offering buprenorphine treatment" and can be accessed electronically the Center for a Health Maryland website at <http://www.healthymaryland.org/substance-use-buprenorphine.php>

BBI Participating Treatment Sites

Harambee Treatment Center

3939 Reisterstown Road
Program Director: Wardell Barksdale
Physicians: Dr. Paul Kulpinski and Dr. Eric Weintraub
Special Note: Harambee is part of the University of Maryland

Next Passage

2901 Druid Park Drive
Program Director: Shirley Belton
Physician: Dr. Darshan Saluja
Special Note: Next Passage is part of Bon Secours

Universal Counseling Services

122 Weber Street
Program Director: Tracy Schulden
Physicians: Dr. Stacey Thompson, Kim Latterner, PA-C

Family Health Centers of Baltimore

631 Cherry Hill Road
Substance Abuse Program Coordinator: Ernest Young
Physician: Dr. Nahid Siddiqi

Partners in Recovery

2225 North Charles Street
Program Director: Edward Williams
Physicians: Dr. Mark Illuminati, Bonnie Franckowiak, CNP-A

Total Health Care

1515 West Saratoga Street
Program Director: Wendy Merrick
Physicians: Dr. Joseph Griffin, Dr. Rama Shankar and Dr. Jayahree Amble

Featured BBI Site

Total Health Care

Total Health Care (THC) is a Federally Qualified Community Health Center and has been a leader in providing buprenorphine treatment in Baltimore City through its substance abuse treatment program. Total Health Care's substance abuse treatment program has been in existence for over 20 years and has served the community by providing IOP, OP, and, since last year, long-term buprenorphine maintenance therapy.

Ms. Wendy Merrick, the Director of the Substance Abuse Program, has been instrumental in implementing the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative at THC and is continuously providing feedback from a clinical perspective on how to improve the Initiative.



The substance abuse program at THC works very closely with THC's primary care program so that the transfer process from the substance abuse side to the primary care side is seamless. Total Health Care has the advantage of being able to offer both services within the same organization, fostering ongoing communication between counselors and primary care physicians and making continued counseling services even after a patient has transferred more readily accessible. Since the fall of 2006, THC has treated a total of 195 patients with buprenorphine in the substance abuse program or in the primary health care program as part of the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative.

Ms. Tammy Braswell of Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc. is the designated treatment liaison for THC and has worked with many THC patients very successfully over the past months.

Congratulations

Congrats to **Sadie Matarazzo, MSW!** She is a recent recipient of the City Health Commissioner's commendation for her dedication to serving the Baltimore Community.

Tell us your thoughts about the BBI Team Newsletter!

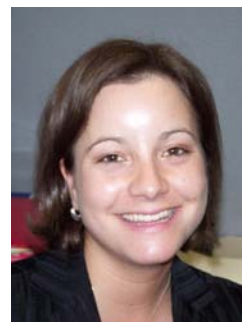
[Click here to send your comments and suggestions!](#)

We want to hear from you

We hope you have enjoyed the third issue of Baltimore's BUP Team Newsletter!

If you have questions about the Baltimore Buprenorphine Initiative please contact [Vanessa Kuhn](#) or call 410-637-1900 ext. 286.

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please send a reply to [Vanessa Kuhn](#) with the subject "unsubscribe." or see the link below.



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