

# A guide to treating Opioid Use Disorder

Medications such as Buprenorphine can be used for the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). Aetna Better Health<sup>®</sup> of Illinois has compiled resources and tools to aid successful prescribing of OUD treatments.

## What has changed with OUD prescribing?

The X-waiver — the previous federal requirement for health care providers to obtain a waiver to prescribe OUD medications — is no longer in effect. That means prescriptions used to treat OUD now only require a standard Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration number. The DATA-Waiver registration number is no longer required on OUD prescriptions. There are no longer any limits or patient caps on the number of patients a prescriber may treat for opioid use disorder with Buprenorphine.



## Who can prescribe Buprenorphine?

Providers with a current DEA registration that includes Schedule III authority may now prescribe Buprenorphine for OUD in their practice if permitted by applicable state law. Providers should make certain they meet training requirements that became effective June 27, 2023. Consider using the training resources listed below.



## Resources for providers

Learn more about OUD prescribing from the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

[Buprenorphine fact sheet and quick start guide](#) from SAMHSA

[American Medical Association Substance Use Disorder How-to-Guide](#)

[American Society of Addiction Medicine Practice Guideline for Treatment of OUD](#)

## HEDIS<sup>®</sup> measure for OUD

Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (POD) is the HEDIS<sup>®</sup> measure that assesses the percentage of OUD pharmacotherapy treatment events among members ages 16 and older that continue for at least 180 days (6 months).

[Use our tip sheet on the POD measure.](#)

Learn more about the POD measure from the [National Committee for Quality Assurance \(NCQA\)](#).



## Training for prescribers

New or renewing DEA registrants must meet training requirements that went into effect June 27, 2023. Upon application, registrants must have at least one of the following:

- **A total of eight hours of training** from certain organizations on opioid or other substance use disorders for practitioners renewing or newly applying for a registration from the DEA to prescribe any Schedule II-V controlled medications;
- **Board certification in addiction medicine or addiction psychiatry** from the American Board of Medical Specialties, American Board of Addiction Medicine, or the American Osteopathic Association; or
- **Graduation within five years and status in good standing** from medical, advanced practice nursing or physician assistant school in the United States that included successful completion of an opioid or other substance use disorder curriculum of at least eight hours.

**Here are some resources for prescribers to obtain required training:**

- Illinois Advance offers online continuing education programs for Medicaid prescribers. Learn more about available training at [IllinoisAdvance.com](https://www.illinoisadvance.com).
- [Providers Clinical Support System](#)



## Referring patients to treatment

[Illinois DocAssist](#) is a program of the University of Illinois Chicago to help primary care providers screen, diagnose and treat mental health and substance abuse problems of children, adolescents and perinatal patients. Services include:

- **Consultation:** Free consultations with a board-certified psychiatrist are available to providers at **1-866-986-2778**, Monday-Friday, 9 AM-5 PM CST. You can learn more at [IllinoisDocAssist.uic.edu](https://illinoisdocassist.uic.edu).
- **Training**
- **Referral assistance:** Primary care providers can get assistance with referrals to therapy, psychiatric services and other social services and support through Illinois DocAssist. Treatment locator tools are also available on the [website](#).

## Questions?

Our team is available to help providers navigate OUD prescribing and training resources. If you need additional support, please reach out to the Aetna Better Health® of Illinois Pharmacy team at [ABHILPharmacy@aetna.com](mailto:ABHILPharmacy@aetna.com).