

Patient and Family  
Agreement on Opioids

## **We care about our patients and are committed to their recovery and wellness. We offer our patients medications and options for various services to keep them from going into withdrawal while they are hospitalized with us and after discharge. This agreement will ensure that we are working together to meet this goal.**

## **Background**

Opioids are a special class of medications used to treat certain kinds of pain. Some of the common examples of opioids are morphine, oxycodone, codeine, buprenorphine, methadone, and fentanyl. Opioids are strong and effective in treating pain, but they have serious side effects and can lead to addiction. Opioids are not right for everyone. There are several opioid alternatives to pain management that are effective and may be better for your needs. It is important to ask your healthcare provider about which medications are better suited for your pain. Both you and your prescriber should agree on a treatment plan based on your individual medical condition and healthcare needs.

Addiction

Addiction is a disease of the brain that makes it difficult for an individual to abstain from substances including opioids, even when using the substance causes problems for the person’s physical health, emotional health, fulfillment of responsibilities, and relationships with others. Addiction is a disease that can happen to anyone regardless of sex, age, race, socioeconomic status, etc. ***Although addiction is a chronic disease (lasts for a long time), there are effective treatment options to help patients recover and lead healthy lives.***

Recovery

There are a number of different treatment options for an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). Many patients find that the best approach includes more than one type of care or service. Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) uses medications and counseling together to treat OUD. The medications typically offered in MAT are buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone. All three drugs work differently to treat addiction.

Many patients try more than one treatment option, including the use of counseling and/or self-help services (such as Narcotics Anonymous, Smart Recovery, among others) before finding the right fit. Please note that you can attend any of these groups if you have an addiction to any substance(s). For example, even if you are addicted to heroin, you could attend an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and benefit from it. Some people try more than one of these groups before they find the one that best suits their needs in their journey to recovery.

Should you choose not to pursue medication-assisted treatment, you may still benefit from counseling as an individual, with your partner or family, or in a group of people who are also pursuing recovery. While you are here at our hospital, it is our goal to help you connect with resources that best fit your needs in your journey to recovery. We encourage you to discuss the various options available for your treatment and ask questions about how we can help to jumpstart this process.

***You do not need to go through recovery alone***. It is important to reach out and not be afraid to get the help you need. Members of your medical team, including doctors, nurses, therapists, social workers, recovery coaches, and others have been trained to help you in this journey right from the time of your admission to discharge. We encourage you to also talk with the hospital case management staff to discuss the various clinical, community-based, and self-help resources to assist in your recovery after your discharge from this hospital. We are united in our goal to help you win the battle of opioid addiction.

Overdose

Unintentional overdose of prescription opioids as well as non-prescribed opioids such as heroin can lead to death. Having multiple opioid prescriptions from different prescribers also increases the likelihood of overdose.

**It is important to know about naloxone** (often referred to by the brand name Narcan®), which reverses opioid overdose. Naloxone can be prescribed by your provider and in Massachusetts it is also available without a prescription at retail pharmacies. While there is information to educate you, your family, and close friends on how to use it, we encourage you to talk to your treating provider to learn more and be educated on how to use it.

Patient-Centered Policy for Inpatient Opioid Misuse

***Because we care about your wellbeing and are committed to providing excellent care, we are committed to working with patients who have opioid use disorder and who are at risk for misuse of prescribed and non-prescribed opioids while receiving care within our institution.***

In order to provide safe and high-quality care, we screen patients for opioid dependence, misuse, and/or addiction. Our focus is to treat you with respect in a non-judgmental manner. It is important that you work with your treating provider to share information regarding your use of opioids and/or other drugs, including alcohol and street drugs. Your previous history of drug use and family history are very important to developing your treatment plan.

A urine or blood drug screening may also be requested at any time to further help us in our treatment plan for you. If there is significant concern for your safety, we may ask that you permit us to search you and your belongings or your visitors’ belongings.

Our goal is to work with you to treat your addiction to opioids or other substances, and to assist you on the journey to recovery. Certain items pose a safety risk to you and/or others during your hospital stay and include, but are not limited to: drug paraphernalia; prescribed drugs, including opioids; use of alcohol; and controlled substances, including heroin. For your safety and that of other patients and our staff, we will remove these items if discovered.

Family and Visitors

A patient’s family and visitors can play a major role in the treatment and recovery of their loved ones. We invite family members, designated patient representatives, caregivers, and visitors to read this policy and to learn about addiction and why it matters to have the cooperation of loved ones. Although we are welcoming to families and loved ones, there are times when we cannot accommodate visitation or interaction with patients. As written in this document and the Inpatient Opioid Misuse Prevention Policy, we ask all visitors to help us ensure the safety of all patients and staff members. It is against our policy to bring any prohibited substances into any of our facilities for personal use or to distribute to someone else. All use of prohibited substances is strictly banned. If there is any suspicion that prohibited substances may have been brought into the hospital or that a patient may have been using a prohibited substance, we reserve the right to ask all visitors to submit to a search and/or termination of all visitation privileges for the visitor. We expect all visitors to comply with this important policy.

Additional Resources for Your Recovery

We want to assure you that we understand that addiction is a complicated disease and we are committed to helping with your recovery. You may come in contact with addiction medicine or psychiatry specialists, chaplains, social workers, and others, who may be part of your care team. We may also collaborate with you and an outside addiction medicine/recovery agency to transition your care to a more appropriate hospital or other treatment facility. We encourage you to ask questions, be active in your care, and cooperate with your care team.

***Ultimately, you should remember that addiction is treatable and although it is tough and complex, there are* many *tools and techniques available to help you live a healthy, happy, and productive life.***



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**Patient and Family Agreement on Opioids**

***FOR PATIENTS***

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| --- | --- |
| 1 | I will be honest with my treating clinician and other members of the care team about the use of any drugs both prescribed and non-prescribed during my stay in this hospital. I further agree to not take drugs that have not been prescribed and/or authorized for my use during my stay in this hospital. |
| 2 | I will tell my treating clinician and other members of the care team about any drugs I have used in the past, including prescription drugs and non-prescribed drugs. |
| 3 | I understand that patients may be screened for opioid use disorder. I further understand that it may be important to conduct a urine or blood drug test at any time during my stay in this hospital. As a result, I understand and am aware that my refusal to comply with such a request may result in changes to my treatment options. |
| 4 | For my safety and that of other patients and staff, I am aware that the hospital staff may request a physical search of my person, my belongings, and/or gifts brought to me while in this hospital if there is significant concern about my safety. If I do not feel comfortable having my belongings searched I may ask that they are secured until the time of my discharge. |
| 5 | I understand that my care team is committed to my health. To ensure my best possible care, I will cooperate fully with them.I have fully reviewed this agreement with hospital staff who have determined that I understand the sections explained to me. My questions have been answered and I fully understand the content of this policy and agreement. |

Patient’s/Authorized Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Patient’s Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name and Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Patient and Family Agreement on Opioids**

***FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND VISITORS***

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| --- | --- |
| 1 | As a visitor, I agree that I will not bring any drugs, prescribed or non-prescribed, into this hospital for use or misuse by me or another person in this hospital. I am allowed to take medication prescribed by my provider for my use, according to my provider’s instructions. I understand that my ability to visit my loved one may be affected if I am unable to participate in this shared agreement. |
| 2 | As a visitor, I agree to be honest with the staff of this hospital and will, if asked, inform them of any prohibited substances I know to be present, including opioids, alcohol, any other drugs, and harmful objects. I understand that the goal of all members of hospital staff, including security officers, is to ensure the health and safety and patients and staff. |
| 3 | I am aware that if there is significant concern for the safety of my loved one, staff within the hospital may ask to conduct a physical search of my person, my belongings and/or gifts that I bring into this hospital. If I do not want my belongings to be searched I understand that I can ask for them to be secured until the end of my visit. |
| 4 | I agree to alert the hospital staff immediately if I am aware or observe a patient experiencing any unusual symptoms (such as a side effect or overdose) from any substance, whether or not I gave it to him or her. |

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name and Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_