

## Buffalo Matters Background & Overview

The Buffalo MATTERS network was built on the public health model of prevention and treatment. In 2016, the University at Buffalo Department Emergency Medicine (UBEM) in combination with UBIMD Emergency Medicine set out to decrease opioid prescribing in their emergency departments. Guidelines were established for patients and prescribers for appropriate opioid prescribing. To ensure consistency across the region, these documents were endorsed by every major health system and urgent care organization in Western New York. From 2015 to 2018, the emergency departments of the major academic health centers in Buffalo saw a >50% decline in opioid prescribing.

The Buffalo MATTERS network began with an aggressive effort to train emergency physicians and advanced practice providers (APPs) in responsible opioid prescribing, medication assisted treatment (buprenorphine primarily), and rapid referrals. These trainings and initial organization of the network were supported by UBEM and a grant from the John R. Oishei Foundation. Ongoing efforts to provide DATA 2000 waiver training to emergency physicians and APPs continue.

Understanding that rapid, reliable referrals were necessary for success. Several substance abuse treatment organizations initially agreed to a common set of values to ensure consistency of treatment approach across the network. Initially, patients were referred from one hospital to 3 clinics to ensure proof of concept. Over the course of 2018, the network grew to 13 hospitals that refer to 27 separate substance abuse treatment clinics. As of the fall of 2018, over 60 weekly appointments are offered to patients referred through this network.

Future goals of the Buffalo MATTERS network include enrolling nearly every hospital in the 8 counties of Western New York. Expansion plans include receiving referrals from primary care and OB/GYN offices, urgent care centers, employing telehealth technology and more.

For professionals visiting this site, we hope you find the clinical resources helpful and we would be happy to assist you in developing similar networks in your region.

For patients visiting the site, please explore the “resources for patients/families” section for helpful links.