



Clinical Champion Update

Date: 5/23/22

Subject: Persistent Pain

According to DrugAbuseStatistics.org, in Massachusetts the average number of deaths related to opioids is about 1991 from overdose. Prescription opioids are a factor in 16.6% of opioid overdose deaths and opioids are a factor in 88.8% of overdose deaths. Doctors write enough prescriptions for 35.3% of residents to have one. 29.3 out of every 100,000 residents die from an opioid overdose. That’s 100.7% above or more than twice the national death rate (2022).

Since 2019, we have all been working diligently to decrease our opioid prescriptions and the total Morphine Equivalents for our patients. As you tell from the following charts, we have made significant downward trends in opioid prescribing and new patients in each category are patients that have come to Valley Medical on opioid prescriptions.

	Less Than 90				Total
	AMC	EHC	GHC	NHC	
Q2 2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q3 2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q4 2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q1 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q3 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q4 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q1 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q2 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Q3 2021	88	162	197	164	611
Q4 2021	91	166	193	161	611
Q1 2022	90	175	186	158	609
New Patients	0	17	4	5	26

	Between 90 and 200				
	AMC	EHC	GHC	NHC	Total
Q2 2019	18	61	84	57	220
Q3 2019	18	61	80	56	215
Q4 2019	11	59	54	38	162
Q1 2020	16	75	59	54	204
Q3 2020	17	67	64	49	197
Q4 2020	14	69	59	45	187
Q1 2021	13	69	60	43	185
Q2 2021	12	65	59	49	185
Q3 2021	13	61	53	44	171
Q4 2021	13	60	55	43	171
Q1 2022	12	60	53	41	166
New Patients	0	4	4	3	11

	Over 200				
	AMC	EHC	GHC	NHC	Total
Q2 2019	7	34	62	20	123
Q3 2019	5	30	57	22	114
Q4 2019	5	22	28	19	74
Q1 2020	5	23	26	20	74
Q3 2020	3	23	26	19	71
Q4 2020	3	22	24	18	67
Q1 2021	2	22	23	19	66
Q2 2021	2	22	24	19	67
Q3 2021	2	20	24	17	63
Q4 2021	2	20	21	16	59
Q1 2022	2	21	18	14	55
New Patients	0	2	0	0	2

There are many strategies to help patients reduce their doses. A great resource for providers to use when trying to develop a tapering plan is a pdf file from HHS, which can be found at: https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/sites/default/files/2019-10/Dosage_Reduction_Discontinuation.pdf

Remember treatment for persistent pain is a multidisciplinary task and medication is just one portion of treatment. We must encourage our patients to get involved with behavioral health, physical therapy, and mindfulness. There are multiple CBT programs, movement programs and alternative therapies for persistent pain. There is a list of resources on the share drive under chronic pain. The persistent pain SMA is also running 10-week sessions, via Zoom and is open to any patient who lives with persistent pain and would be a good candidate for a shared appointment.

Should you have any questions, know of any resources available or wish to learn more about our persistent pain, or have a patient to suggest for the SMA, please do not hesitate to reach out to the committee.

Laura Duffy and Trisha Rogers

Clinical champions for persistent pain committee