

EXAMINING ACCESS TO LOW-BARRIER TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT PEOPLE WITH OPIOID USE DISORDER



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Abstract

- Opioid use disorder (OUD) is a significant public health issue in the US, particularly during pregnancy and postpartum.
- Access to medication for OUD can reduce relapse risk, but pregnant people face barriers to treatment.
- The objective of this study is to examine the accessibility of treatment options for opioid use disorder (OUD) among pregnant individuals in Ohio.
- A "secret shopper" approach was used to evaluate the accessibility of OUD treatment options for pregnant individuals in Butler and Clermont County, Ohio.
- Only a small percentage of clinics responded and accepted pregnant individuals, with limited availability of appointments.
- Maps were then created showing the locations of these treatment providers, giving a visual resource for public health professionals and people seeking treatment to use to access low barrier treatment for OUD.

Results and Discussion

- In Butler County, only 50% of the 68 identified clinics that provide medication for OUD responded to the calls.
- Out of the 34 locations that responded, only 44% accepted pregnant people, and 24% did not.
- In Clermont County, out of the 14 clinics identified, only 7 answered the calls, and 5 (71%) accepted pregnant people.
- Across both counties, only a fraction of identified treatment locations accepted pregnant individuals, with even fewer allowing children to accompany patients during appointments.
- Some of the locations listed in the SAMHSA Treatment online locator had inaccurate information regarding their addresses, latitudes, and longitudes.
- Our study showed a lack of access to low-barrier treatment for OUD for pregnant individuals in Southwestern Ohio.
- The findings highlight the need to address the unique needs of pregnant individuals seeking OUD treatment and improve access to care for this population.
- Some of the locations listed in the SAMHSA Treatment online locator had inaccurate information, emphasizing the need for continued efforts to maintain and update the accuracy of these directories.
- Secret shopper approach allowed to gather standardized and controlled information.
- Findings suggest the need for increased access to low-barrier MOUD treatment for pregnant individuals and improved communication and coordination among treatment providers.

County	Total number of locations	Call answered	Accept pregnant people	Early appointment	Allow children to accompany
Butler	68	34	15	11	11
Clermont	14	7	5	5	2

- Addressing the social determinants of health that contribute to OUD and its associated risks may also be critical to improving access to care for pregnant individuals with OUD.
- Maps of treatment locations can be a valuable resource for public health professionals and individuals seeking OUD treatment.
- Future research could explore the use of technology and data visualization tools to improve access to care for vulnerable populations, including pregnant individuals with OUD.

Introduction

- Opioid use disorder (OUD) is a significant public health crisis in the United States and is responsible for a rising number of drug overdose fatalities.
- Pregnant women with OUD often face challenges in accessing treatment resources compared to non-pregnant individuals with SUDs.
- Exposure to opioids during pregnancy can lead to adverse outcomes for infants, making it crucial to address OUD in pregnant individuals.
- Medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) is a promising treatment approach that has been shown to reduce the risk of relapse and improve pregnancy outcomes for pregnant people with OUD.
- Types of MOUD include:
 - Buprenorphine (Subutex or Suboxone)
 - Naltrexone (Vivitrol)
 - Methadone
- However, many barriers prevent pregnant individuals with OUD from accessing MOUD



MOUD Treatment Access in Hamilton County

Maps showing locations of all contacted providers in Butler and Clermont Counties



Figure 1 & 2: Maps of substance use treatment and buprenorphine practitioners (purple dots) in Butler County (n=68) and Clermont County from SAMHSA website (n=14).

Locations of all contacted providers in Butler and Clermont Counties

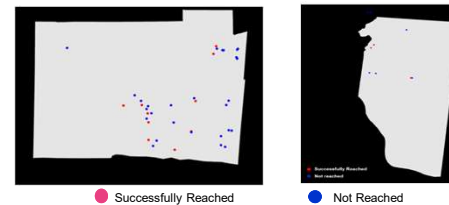


Figure 3 & 4. Locations of 68 in Butler and 14 in Clermont contacted treatment providers. 34 in Butler and 7 in Clermont were successfully contacted with someone answering the phone (red dots). 34 in Butler and 7 in Clermont were deemed "unreachable" after 3 attempts to contact for various reasons (blue dots).

Earliest availability to be seen at treatment locations



Figure 5: 15 locations offered an appointment within 0-3 days (orange dots), 1 offered an appointment within 4-7 days (green dots), 1 offered an appointment within 8-14 days (blue dots), and 2 offered an appointment over 14 days from the day the call was made (lime dots) and 15 doesn't sure when the next appointment is available (pink dots).

Figure 6: 5 locations offered an appointment within 0-3 days (orange dots), 1 offered an appointment within 4-7 days (green dots) and 1 doesn't sure when the next appointment is available (blue dots).

Policies on children accompanying patients to appointments by location

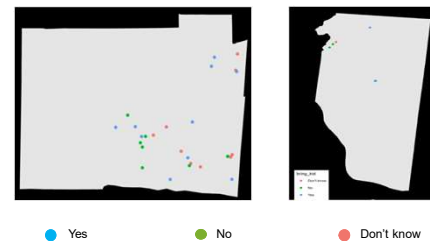


Figure 7: 11 locations allowed children to come to the appointment (blue dots), 9 did not allow children to come (green dots), and 14 location's policy on children was unknown (orange dot).

Figure 8: 2 locations allowed children to come to the appointment (blue dots), 4 did not allow children to come (green dots), and 1 location's policy on children was unknown (orange dot).

Future Directions & Impacts



- Continue calling the remaining counties in Ohio to assess the availability of MOUD treatment for pregnant individuals.
- Expand the study to include other states and regions to assess the variability in care options and access to treatment.
- The study can inform policymakers and healthcare providers about the need for increased access to MOUD treatment for pregnant individuals.
- The results can help identify areas with limited access to care, which can inform the development of targeted interventions and policies to improve access to treatment.
- Use of a secret shopper approach can encourage treatment providers to improve their services and increase their acceptance of pregnant individuals seeking MOUD treatment.

Methods

- Identified OUD treatment providers in Southwestern Ohio using SAMHSA Treatment online locator
- Utilized a secret shopper approach with a script for team members to simulate the experience of a pregnant mother seeking treatment
- Consulted with MOUD treatment experts and patient partners with lived experience to develop a script addressing common barriers
- Chose a secret shopper approach to avoid social desirability bias and ensure the authenticity of resources available to actual people seeking treatment.
- Collected information on policies, availability, and accessibility of treatment providers using a standardized script
- Used REDCap to collect data and R software to calculate proportions and create visual maps of provider locations

Selected References

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