

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is proud to support the *Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic* sponsored by the National Academy of Medicine, the Aspen Institute, and more than 55 other organizations.

RBHS is a large evolving academic health system in New Jersey that integrates the strengths of eight health-related schools and a behavioral health care system towards its strategic goals of advancing clinical care, education and training, and biomedical research.

As a Network Organization we look forward to collaborating with other stakeholders to mitigate the consequences of opioid use. Such harms include addiction, dependence, hyperalgesia, overdose, and death; do not discriminate by demographic group; and occur as a result of the use of any opioid independent of its legal status. We realize we have much to learn from the others in the Collaborative and we hope to reciprocate by detailing our success and opportunities for improvement.

We have developed a system-wide *opioid stewardship program* that is tightly aligning many of the isolated efforts. Existing and planned efforts address all four of the focus areas set forth by the Academy and are committed to continued refinement and expansion.

Health professional education and training: through cross-institutional and cross-disciplinary efforts we have introduced educational activities into all levels of our undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. This includes didactic instruction in both prevention efforts, such as improved pain management strategies, and treatment approaches, including buprenorphine waiver training.

Opioid prescribing guidelines and evidence standards: In addition to developing opioid prescribing guidance that integrate with the state regulations, we have developed and implemented best-practice guidelines for multimodal approaches to analgesia that limit opioid use, EHR defaults for opioid prescribing, and are working to ease the providers access to the prescription drug monitoring program.

Prevention, treatment, and recovery services: We have implemented the use of peer recovery specialists, provide prevention and education services at school districts across the state, provided extensive buprenorphine waiver training opportunities, provide ambulatory withdrawal management via our Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in New Brunswick and Newark, provide induction and MAT management services in New Brunswick, Newark and at all of the NJ Department of Corrections prison sites, and created pathways for buprenorphine induction in the ED with a “warm-handoff” to long term treatment. Our goal is to provide a seamless transition for

patients with opioid use disorder to minimize distraction and enhance sustained recovery.

Research, data, and metrics needs: Extensive quality improvement programs exist within the system on several levels and include in some venues an assessment of individual prescribing practices. There are basic science, clinical, health policy, and epidemiological researchers with extensive grant funding.