

## Clinical Pharmacist with DEA License: Efforts to Increase Access to Buprenorphine in a Veteran Population

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Opioid overdoses continue to rise in the United States. In 2021, a record 80,411 reported overdoses occurred in the US alone, nearly double that in 2017. Buprenorphine's pharmacology is ideal for management of patients with opioid use disorder (OUD) with or without chronic pain.

Within the VA, clinical pharmacist practitioners (CPP) are uniquely equipped to operate with significant scope of practice to prescribe medications including controlled substances, an opportunity to vastly increase access to care for veterans suffering from OUD, complex opioid dependency or pain.

**Purpose/hypothesis:** The purpose of this case series is to describe how DEA licensed pain CPP safely and effectively manages 1) Suboxone home inductions to increase access for OUD 2) rotations from traditional full mu opioids to chronic pain buprenorphine products and 3) off label use of Suboxone for pain.

**Procedures/data/observations:** Cases were collected in usual workload for clinical pharmacist. High rate of tolerability and efficacy noted with buprenorphine across all products.

**Conclusions/applications:** DEA licensed Pain CPPs can make an immediate positive impact for veterans with OUD and/or complex pain and may be more comfortable with buprenorphine than many other providers.

Presentation link:  
<https://bupe2021.com/10-5055-bupe-24-rp-1010/>

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