



 The Academy
Integrating Behavioral Health & Primary Care

UPDATED!

MEDICATION FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER (MOUD) IN PRIMARY CARE PLAYBOOK

Available on the AHRQ Academy website, this Playbook is refreshed with updated and new content to meet the evolving needs of primary care providers tackling the opioid crisis. This essential resource reflects major changes in policy and clinical practice, with an emphasis on **person-centered, low-threshold care**, and featuring a **Quick Start Guide** with all the information needed to begin this life-saving treatment.

 **Wendy Kissin, PhD**
Principal Research Associate, Westat

 **Garrett Moran, PhD**
Principal, Moran Consulting



integrationacademy.ahrq.gov

Newly Updated AHRQ Integration Academy Playbook Offers Quick Start Guide for Treating Opioid Use Disorders in Primary Care Practices

The AHRQ Academy for Integrating Behavioral Health and Primary Care has released the newly updated Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) Playbook with several enhancements, including a new Quick Start Guide with everything primary care practices need to immediately begin prescribing buprenorphine for opioid use disorder (OUD). If you have patients with OUD in your practice or community, providers who are ready and willing to prescribe buprenorphine, and leadership that supports providing MOUD, the Quick Start Guide can help you start prescribing buprenorphine in 2026.

The larger Playbook also includes:

- **Major Regulatory Updates:** Reflects the removal of the X-waiver, expanded telehealth, and over-the-counter naloxone availability.
- **New Critical Content:** Addresses the impact of fentanyl, adolescent overdose rates, and the experiences of unhoused individuals with OUD.
- **Emphasis on Compassionate Care:** Focuses on low-threshold, person-centered care.

What's next? A field evaluation will launch in Spring 2026 with primary care practices to test and refine this Playbook's usability and impact in real-world settings.

[Access the Resource](#)

AHRQ Integration Academy Thanks Dr. Noah Nesin and Dr. Frank DeGruy for Their Contributions to the NIAC



**Dr. Frank Verloin deGruy III,
M.D., M.S.F.M.**



Dr. Noah Nesin, M.D., FAAFP

We thank Drs. Frank DeGruy and Noah Nesin and for their combined 24 years of service on the National Integration Academy Council (NIAC), as they conclude their terms. Both served as Chair of the NIAC during their tenures and have been integral to the success of the AHRQ Integration Academy as they shared their expertise to guide the work of the NIAC and the Integration Academy as a whole.

Throughout their tenure, Drs. DeGruy and Nesin have provided invaluable leadership and insight, helping shape strategies that advance integrated care. Their commitment to collaboration and innovation strengthened the AHRQ Integration Academy's mission and fostered meaningful progress. From championing patient-centered approaches to guiding policy discussions, their contributions have left a lasting impact on our work.

We extend our deepest gratitude for their dedication, vision, and years of service.

What's New in Integration



Health Centers Provide Behavioral Health Services to Patients With Substance Use Disorder

A newly released study from the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (OIG) shows that in 2022, 90 percent of health centers provided at least one type of behavioral health service to patients with substance use disorder (SUD), while 56 percent offered comprehensive treatment. [Access the OIG study >>](#)



Strategies for Integrating Behavioral Health Into Value-Based Care

The American Medical Association (AMA) STEPS Forward Innovation Academy just hosted a webinar sharing real-world strategies for successfully integrating behavioral health into value-based care models. The webinar covers how to address common challenges—including patient attribution, access to care, and data evaluation—and deliver timely, equitable, and coordinated whole-person care in value-based arrangements. [Access the AMA STEPS Forward webinar >>](#)



NATIONAL ACADEMY
FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY

How States Modernize Facility Licensure to Advance Integrated Behavioral Health

States are actively reforming facility licensure requirements to advance the delivery of integrated behavioral health and primary care services. A recently published National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) blog post highlights key strategies states are using to simplify regulations and remove administrative barriers, supporting evidence-based, cost-effective integrated care. [Access the NASHP blog post >>](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS®

National Policy Scan for Behavioral Health Integration (BHI)

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing and the National Association of Community Health Centers Joint Policy Scan summarizes and identifies current legislation, grant programs, and other policy initiatives that are relevant or could impact state primary care and behavioral health associations and their memberships. [Access the National BHI Policy Scan >>](#)



Evidence Report on Comprehensive Rural Primary Care Services

The Primary Care Collaborative (PCC) recently published *Closing the Distance in Rural Primary Care: Evidence, Stories and Solutions*, a snapshot of the state of rural primary care in the US that includes a literature review, federal legislative trends affecting rural primary care, a quantitative analysis of primary care trends, and five case studies that describe current rural practice models. [Access the PCC Evidence Report >>](#)

AHRQ and HHS Highlights

[Several SUD Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Programs Extended Through Fiscal Year 2030](#)

On December 1, 2025, the Trump Administration passed the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act of 2025, extending a number of SUD prevention, treatment, and recovery programs through fiscal year 2030, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Comprehensive Opioid Recovery Centers grant program.

[New Initiative to Invest \\$100 Million for Testing Novel Behavioral Health Treatment Approaches](#)

The Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health announced it will invest up to \$100 million in more quantitative measures of mental and behavioral health

through its new Evidence-Based Validation & Innovation for Rapid Therapeutics in Behavioral Health initiative.

Upcoming Events



[IHS: Behavioral Health Integration Webinar Series: Integrated Care Within and Beyond the Clinic Wall](#)

- **Date:** Thurs, Dec 18, 2025
- **Time:** 12-1pm EST
- **Host:** Indian Health Service



[CBT for Anxiety in Pediatric Primary Care](#)

- **Date:** Wed, Jan 7, 2026
- **Time:** 1-2pm EST
- **Host:** UMass Chan Medical School Center for Integrated Primary Care

[Access the Full Calendar](#)

Looking for help? The [Ecosystem Directory](#) offers an interactive, searchable collection of notable programs and organizations advancing the field of behavioral

health integration, with the goal of helping to connect providers and others with partners available to support their integration needs.

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