



Helping Members with Opioid Addiction During the COVID-19 Outbreak and Beyond



The opioid epidemic is a complex problem that tragically affects far too many people.

Some progress has been made: Awareness, funding and treatment options for opioid abuse disorders have increased dramatically, and between 2017 and 2018, the number of deaths due to opioid overdose in the US actually declined for the first time in nearly twenty years.¹

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Unfortunately, however, many experts fear there will be a spike in drug overdose deaths due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Social isolation, coupled with the stress and uncertainty of the current situation, can exacerbate substance abuse

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse: Overdose Death Rates

problems. Meanwhile, many of the typical approaches people use to stay on track in recovery—talk therapy, group meetings, medication assistance and exercise—may be unavailable due to stay-at-home and social distancing orders.

Fortunately, the entire recovery community, including the behavioral health and recovery care managers of Tufts Health Plan, is doing everything it can to help people keep up with their recovery programs and get the resources they need. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are no cost shares for behavioral health visits from our network providers and through Teladoc^{®2}.



² Including self-insured groups that did not opt out

If your employees or their family members are struggling, we're here for them.

We encourage you to share the following with your staff:

- Tufts Health Plan Behavioral Health and Addiction Recovery Care Managers are available Monday through Friday for benefit support, navigation, and assistance with locating providers. **Call 800-208-9565.**
- Many behavioral health providers are offering virtual/telephone sessions.
- Until further notice, fully-insured members who access services from Tufts Health Plan network providers via telehealth will have no cost share.
- Many substance use treatment providers are offering increased online and virtual recovery options. Shatterproof and Smart Recovery have listings of online meetings, communities and other recovery resources.
- Mail order is available for non-controlled substances (e.g. antidepressants) for members who have pharmacy benefits with a mail order option. For Suboxone, pharmacies are still open and dispensing. Members should connect with their prescriber regarding prescription renewals.

Visit our website to learn more about the behavioral health and recovery resources available from Tufts Health Plan during the Coronavirus pandemic.

A history of going Above and Beyond to help members get help for opioid abuse disorders.

Tufts Health Plan has always made it a priority to support our members, our employees, and the communities we serve who are struggling with opioid

use—starting long before the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past decade, as the opioid crisis has compounded, we’ve organized multiple teams within Tufts Health Plan to study, analyze and create effective care solutions for our members who are struggling with opioid addiction.

We also created Addiction Recovery Care Management services, staffed with specialized clinicians dedicated to helping members and their families understand addiction, navigate treatment options, and benefits and coverage, and find solutions that fit their situation.

In addition, we’ve made sure our insurance products cover a broad range of treatment options, including coverage for:

- Inpatient detoxification and acute residential treatment
- Partial hospital programs and intensive outpatient programs
- Outpatient therapy and medication management
- Medication-assisted treatment, including methadone maintenance and prescription of Suboxone
- Pharmacy coverage for medications used to treat addiction, and for medications that can reverse an opioid overdose at no cost to members

During this unprecedented time of COVID-19, our goal for our members who struggle with opioid addiction remains the same: To be a trusted partner, and to help them access the care and support they need, whenever they need it. Contact us for more information.

tuftshealthplan.com/contact-us/employers