

# Understanding BUP-ER Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder in Ontario



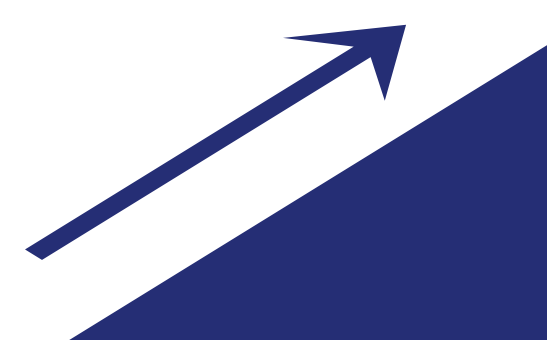
ODPRN

Quality. Relevance. Timeliness.



Extended-release subcutaneous buprenorphine (**BUP-ER**; brand name: Sublocade®), is a new type of **opioid agonist treatment (OAT)** that may improve treatment accessibility for **opioid use disorder (OUD)** due to its monthly formulation.

This study examined the characteristics, treatment patterns, and retention of adults 18+ initiating BUP-ER between February 3, 2020 and March 31, 2022 in Ontario, Canada



There was a steady **increase** in **BUP-ER initiation**, with BUP-ER representing **5.8%** of all new OAT use by March 2022

## 2,366 People initiated BUP-ER

The median **age** at BUP-ER initiation was **38 years**



**59%** were **male**

## Where did they live?

**82%** urban regions

**22%** Northern Ontario

**63%** in the 2 **lowest** neighbourhood income quintiles



After 1 year, **30%** of new BUP-ER users were **still in treatment**



The median time to BUP-ER **discontinuation** was **183 days**



The median time **between doses** was **28 days**

↳ **16%** received a dose within **25 days or less**

## Treatment trends



**52%** of individuals were **co-prescribed buprenorphine/naloxone** at least once

↳ **35%** received buprenorphine/naloxone **more than 14 days** after BUP-ER initiation

Among people initiated on a dose of 300mg who had 3+ injections, **19%** continued to receive **only 300mg doses**

**29%** of those whose dose was reduced to 100mg had a dose **increased** back to 300mg

BUP-ER uptake in Ontario remains relatively low, with high rates of discontinuation in the first year of use. Strategies to reduce BUP-ER discontinuation should explore improving dosing options, increasing access to support services, and updating current BUP-ER dosing guidelines.