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## Impact of COVID-19 on Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder's access to Services and Substance use

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# Impact of COVID-19 on Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder's access to Services and Substance use

Camryn Bernheimer, Erin Kelly, PhD, Lara Weinstein, MD\*

- Opioid crisis has devastated Philadelphia on an individual, community, and SES level
- PA exceeds national averages for opioid dependence and abuse
  - 6th highest drug overdose rate in the nation
- Improved access and quality is needed
- Improvement to logistical, administrative, and stigma related barriers
- COVID-19 disrupted the lives of people globally and exacerbated existing crises, such as the opioid epidemic.

# Objectives & Hypothesis

- Research Question
  - How has COVID-19 impacted MAT service utilization, access to care, and substance use for individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD)?
- Hypothesis
  - MAT service use and access to care decreased, while substance use increased in patients with OUD after COVID-19 when compared to those prior to COVID-19.

# Approach & Results

- Study design- medical chart review
  - Demographics
  - Number of MAT, PCP, and BHC visits
  - Urine drug testing
- MAT patients at Stephen Klein Wellness Center and Pathways to Housing PA
  - n = 170
- COVID-19 was defined as 3/14/2020
  - 3 months prior to COVID-19 compared to 3 months post COVID-19.
- Analysis
  - Frequencies and Fischer's exact test for demographic analysis
  - Independent t-test to compare categorical-continuous relationships
  - Paired t-test when evaluating pre-post relationships

# Approach & Results

- 91% retention rate
- 26 new patients Post COVID-19
  - No significant difference in demographics or location utilized
- Average number of MAT and BHC visits decreased significantly post COVID-19, while PCP visits stayed the same
  - No significant difference in patients meeting appointment guidelines (1 MAT visit per month)
  - Post COVID-19 MAT visits
    - Significant difference in Hispanic vs. non-Hispanic patients
    - No significant difference
      - white vs. non-white patients
      - female vs. male
      - Location utilized



# Approach & Results

- Urine drug screening
  - Overall decrease in the number of positive and negative tests post COVID-19
  - Proportion of tests that were positive pre vs. post
    - Significant decrease in positive buprenorphine tests
    - No significant difference for opioids, cocaine, marijuana, or fentanyl positive tests

# Conclusions

- Patients are being retained in OUD treatment regardless of demographic variables.
- OUD patients are overall coming in for less appointments and less adherent to buprenorphine.
- This could help create new guidelines for how best to treat OUD patients during COVID-19.





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# Future Directions

- Follow up if there has been changes over time
- Determine if telemedicine has played a role in results

# Acknowledgements

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