Demographics and Clinical Characteristics of patients receiving Brixadi ® in the HMC ED as part of the ED-INNOVATION trial

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The United States is facing an opioid-related public health crisis with rising opioid overdose deaths. The ED is a crucial location for initiating evidence-based treatment. Harborview Medical Center (HMC) participated in a national multi-site randomized control trial, ED-INNOVATION, comparing sublingual buprenorphine (BUP) to an extended-release injectable BUP (i.e. Brixadi®) for patients in the ED with untreated opioid use disorder (OUD). We aim to describe the demographics and clinic experience of study patients who received Brixadi®.

This is a descriptive analysis of patients who received Brixadi® in the HMC ED from 12/2020 to 2/2024. All patients met the ED-INNOVATION inclusion criteria (untreated moderate to severe OUD, a clinical opioid withdrawal scale (COWS) score ³ 4, recent illicit opioid use, willingness to initiate BUP during the visit and a plan for ED discharge. Once enrolled, patients underwent informed consent and received Brixadi® administered by the bedside nurse. At discharge, the patients received a referral for ongoing OUD treatment in an outpatient setting.

Twenty-seven patients received Brixadi®;74% male, 67% identified as white, average age of 37 years. Almost all (85%) had Medicaid. One-third were seen by an Advanced Practice Provider (APP), while the rest were seen by residents and/or attending physicians. Fifteen patients presented for OUD-related concerns; of which 4 presented due to opioid withdrawal, 1 for opioid overdose, the other 7 for reasons indirectly related to opioid use. Most patients (n=19) received medications other than BUP in the ED. Post-injection, one patient experienced worsening withdrawal; none experienced precipitated withdrawal. Only 2 patients returned to an ED within one week after their initial HMC ED visit. For the referral appointments 40.7% of the patients attended their first scheduled appointment.

As part of a clinical trial, patients with untreated OUD received Brixadi® and standard care in the HMC ED. Patients in this small sample tolerated the medication well. Brixadi® is now FDA approved and could be an important ED treatment for those with OUD. Next steps include educating patients and providers and implementing systems to provide this new medication.