



Dear UNYSQI Members and Partners,

The Upstate New York Surgical Quality Initiative (UNYSQI) is dedicated to improving the quality of surgical care in our communities. Together with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, we are launching an Opiate Reduction Project, a preventative approach to combatting the opioid epidemic.

Surgeons have traditionally prescribed opiates based on training or local expectations. It has been found that prescription practice patterns, even for the same surgical procedure, vary widely. Research funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health found that the number of pills prescribed may be the most important factor in how many opioid pills the patient will take – outweighing their pain scores, the intensity of their operation and personal factors. Addressing opioid prescribing during the acute care period, among those patients not using opioids, has the greatest potential to reduce the number of new chronic opioid users and minimize unintended distribution of prescription opioids into communities.

We have created guidelines to assist our area surgeons in opiate prescribing in the post-operative period for 22 surgical procedures. These guidelines were created by the Surgeon Champions from our 18 hospitals across Upstate New York after reviewing best practices in this area as well as baseline prescribing practices. These guidelines will serve as a reference to help reduce any unwarranted practice variation recognizing that there are times that clinical judgement will supersede the general recommendations. We will be measuring the effects of guideline implementation throughout the upcoming year to look for reductions in the number of pills prescribed.

We are pleased to let you know the following hospitals are committed to quality surgical care and will be participating in the Opiate Reduction Project beginning July 1, 2019.

Participating UNYSQI Facilities

- A.O. Fox
- Bassett
- Buffalo General Hospital
- Clifton Springs Hospital
- Erie County Medical Center
- Highland Hospital
- Newark Wayne
- Oswego Health
- Our Lady of Lourdes
- Rochester General Hospital
- Samaritan Medical Center
- St. Elizabeth Medical Center
- St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center
- Strong Memorial Hospital
- SUNY Upstate Hospitals
- United Health Services Hospitals
- United Memorial Medical Center
- Unity Hospital



Sincerely,

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