



Buprenorphine Diffusion: The Attitudes of Substance Abuse Treatment Counselors

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In October 2002, the FDA approved buprenorphine for use in the treatment of opioid dependence. Successful diffusion, adoption, and implementation of this medication within the treatment field depends in part upon substance abuse counselors. Using questionnaire data obtained from 2298 counselors in community-based treatment programs in the private and public sectors between June 2002 and July 2004, we explore the diffusion of this new treatment technique. Analyses indicate that a substantial proportion of the clinical workforce is unaware of the effectiveness of buprenorphine as a treatment for opiate addiction. Several variables predicted counselors' attitudes toward buprenorphine. Predictors included receipt of buprenorphine-specific training, educational attainment, years of experience, and 12-step orientation. Implications for the diffusion of this and other emerging treatment techniques are discussed.