



Caron's Position on Medication Assisted Treatment

Dr. Joseph Garbely | March 9, 2018

At Caron, we are committed to removing obstacles that obstruct access to one's sustainable and progressive recovery journey. To that end, Caron utilizes evidence-based principles to guide addiction treatment.

Given the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic we are currently facing as a society, Caron understands and endorses the utilization of Medication-Assisted Treatment as another important tool in treating the chronic, progressive, and potentially fatal disease.

Whether a treatment facility or licensed prescriber chooses Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in the form of Methadone, Buprenorphine (e.g., Suboxone), or injectable Naltrexone Extended Release (XR) (Vivitrol) to address opioid use disorders, it is important to stress that medication alone is not a panacea. Medication must be used as a supportive tool and managed by a qualified healthcare professional in collaboration with treatment specialists as part of a comprehensive therapeutic program. It is important to understand that administration of Buprenorphine or Injectable Naltrexone XR used for MAT in the face of active heroin or other opioid use will precipitate withdrawal and the need for medical management. We need to give doctors and patients choices for MAT, because, no one solution is best for all.

At Caron, we utilize a multi-disciplinary approach to address the co-occurring disorders often found with substance use. This extensive approach also incorporates various treatment modalities, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), as well as utilizing psychological testing, medical evaluation, and 12-Step integration. Therefore, it is imperative that healthcare professionals not lose sight of the clinical protocols needed for patients to succeed. In other words, it is essential to ensure that MAT is only one facet of a comprehensive treatment and recovery plan.

Of the available FDA-approved medication assisted treatment strategies, Caron's choices for maintenance are Naltrexone XR and Buprenorphine. These medications are made available to all patients with an opioid use disorder. Buprenorphine is used as a detoxification taper and, when clinically appropriate, is used as MAT maintenance. The decision between use of Naltrexone XR or Buprenorphine for maintenance is patient centered.

From day one, Caron's medical professionals begin the conversation with our patients about craving and relapse risk, and maintain engagement around those topics throughout our patients' episode of care. We educate all of our patients about the disease concept of addiction and the importance of implementing evidence-based practices, including MAT, to sustain a meaningful and healthy recovery.

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