

# The Colorado Opioid Solution

Co-sponsored by Colorado Hospital Association, Colorado Medical Society and the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention



## Clinicians United to Resolve the Epidemic (CO's CURE)

### Vision Statement

The specialty societies of Colorado develop the nation's first comprehensive, multispecialty medical guidelines to address and resolve the opioid epidemic in Colorado.

### Project Background

The *2017 Opioid Prescribing & Treatment Guidelines*, developed by the Colorado Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (CO ACEP), have revolutionized the treatment of pain and care of patients with Opioid Use Disorder in Colorado's emergency departments (EDs). CO ACEP's work identified four pillars to address the opioid epidemic through the ED:

1. Limiting opioid usage
2. Using alternatives to opioids (ALTOs) for the treatment of pain
3. Implementing harm reduction strategies
4. Improving treatment and referral of patients with Opioid Use Disorder

Colorado Hospital Association (CHA), with the help of its partner organizations, launched a six-month pilot study of the CO ACEP guidelines in 10 EDs, which demonstrated an average 36 percent reduction in opioid administration and 31 percent increase in the use of ALTOs. By the end of 2018, those pilot sites had decreased the administration of opioids by 62 percent. The pilot has since been expanded into the Colorado ALTO Project and rolled out across the state and beyond.



## The CO's CURE Initiative

Encouraged by the success experienced by Colorado's EDs, CHA has partnered with the Colorado Medical Society (CMS) and the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (Consortium) to develop the CO's CURE initiative based on the Colorado ALTO Project model. This initiative gathers specialty society organizations to develop and implement new evidence-based opioid prescribing guidelines in Colorado hospitals and medical practices. The project model has been proven to be effective, and to broaden the impact the approach must be more inclusive, coordinated and ambitious.

The medical community must come together to create and improve opioid prescribing practices for the benefit of clinicians, its patients and communities it serves. CO's CURE guidelines will represent the most forward thinking and comprehensive opioid prescribing guidelines in the nation.

The specialty-specific guidelines will be built around the four pillars that all specialties can adhere to but that allows the specifics to be tailored to the nuances of practice for each specialty.

## CO's CURE Leadership

This initiative is proudly co-sponsored by CHA, CMS and the Consortium. These organizations will lead this initiative and provide necessary support to all participating specialty societies.

## Key Messages

- CHA, CMS and the Consortium are launching a new initiative designed to reduce opioid administrations in the inpatient setting using the same model as the Colorado ALTO Project.
- Because pain is one of the most common reasons for inpatient admissions and often leads to opioid administrations, it is important for specialties to create alternative pain management guidelines in order to reduce opioid exposures.
- Because of the success with the Colorado ALTO Project, the initiative's leadership is again partnering with specialty society organizations to develop prescribing guidelines that are tailored to the nuances of each specialty. This model will lead to clinicians helping champion the work, which accelerates the rate of adoption and sustainability.



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