

# The Six Building Blocks

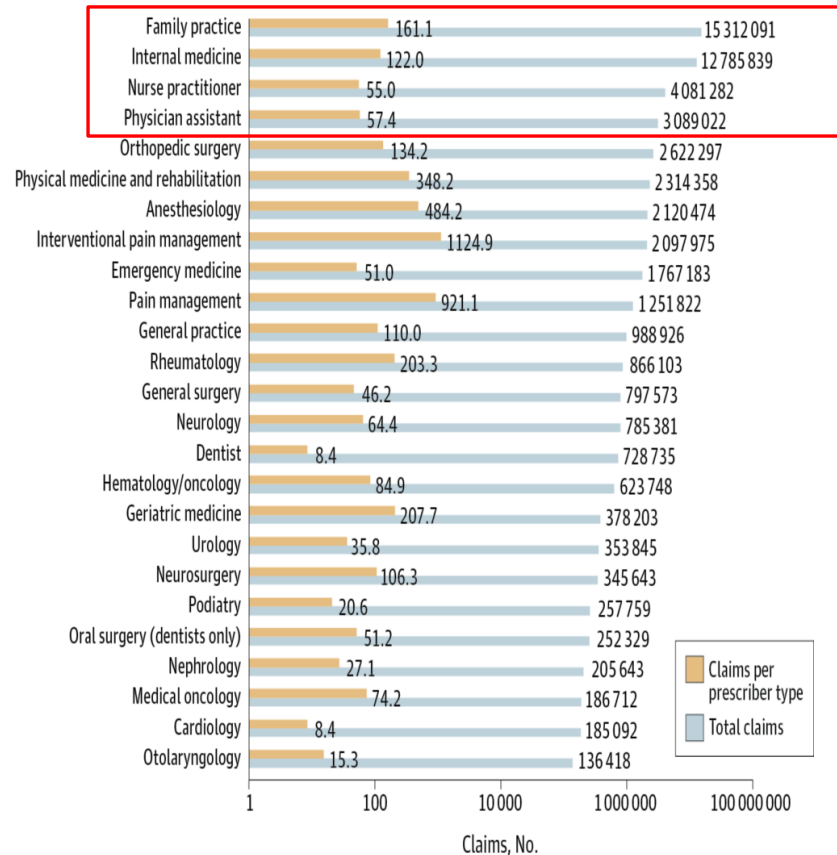
An evidence-based **‘roadmap’** or implementation blueprint to guide clinics and health care organizations in **redesigning opioid management** processes to improve care

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The Six Building Blocks program has received funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (R18HS023750), the Washington State Department of Health (Subcontract HED23124 of Cooperative U17CE002734, funded by the CDC), and the Washington State’s Olympic Communities of Health. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC, NIH, the WA State Department of Health, or the Olympic Communities of Health. The Six Building Blocks Train-the-Practice-Facilitator program is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (Award UG1DAO13714). This program has not been reviewed by NIDA and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute.

# Primary Care Providers are the Top Prescribers

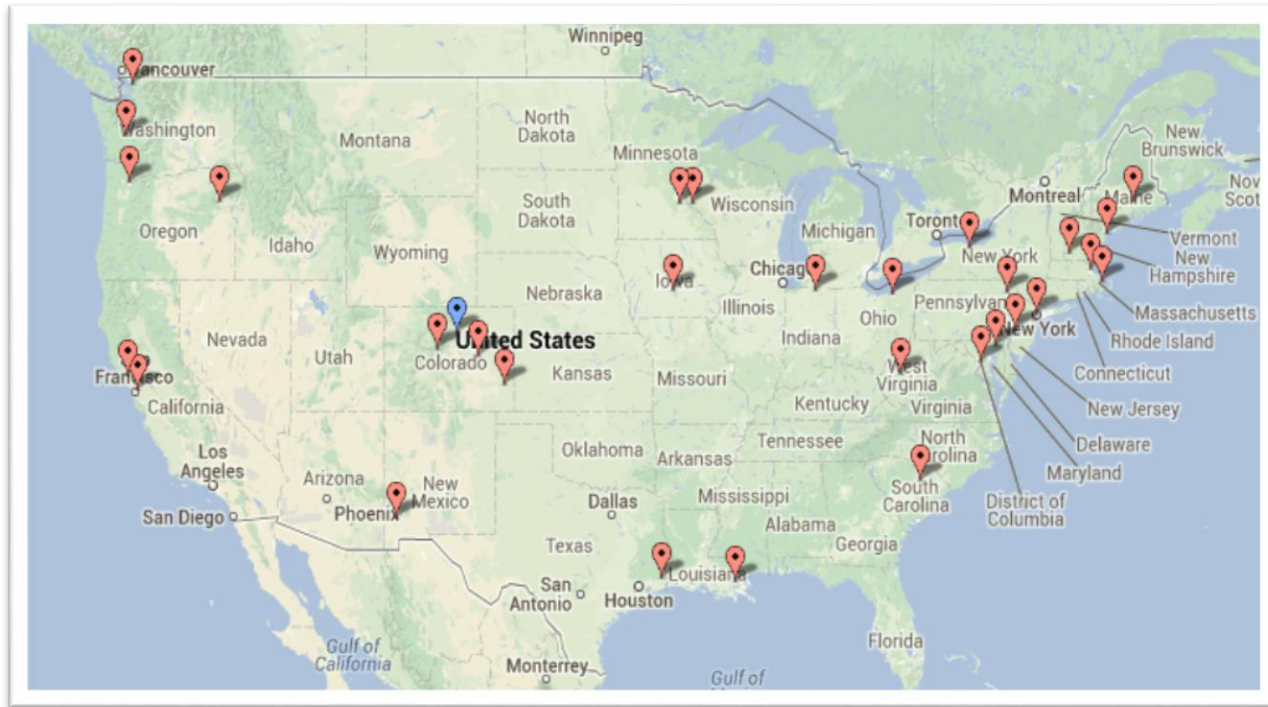
- Most opioids are prescribed by primary care providers (national Medicare data).
- Addresses one of the sources of the opioid epidemic.



Chen JH, Humphreys K, Shah NH, Lembke A. Distribution of opioids by different types of Medicare prescribers. JAMA Intern Med. 2016;176:259–61.



# Learning from Effective Ambulatory Practices (LEAP) study: 20 Innovative Primary Care Practices Nationally were Addressing the Opioid Crisis through Team-Based Care





# The Six Building Blocks

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## **Leadership and consensus**

Demonstrate leadership support and build organization-wide consensus to prioritize more selective and cautious opioid prescribing.



## **Policies, patient agreements, and workflows**

Revise, align, and implement clinic policies, patient agreements, and workflows for health care team members to improve opioid prescribing and care of chronic pain patients.



## **Tracking and monitoring patient care**

Implement pro-active population management before, during, and between clinic visits of all patients on chronic opioid therapy.



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## **Planned, patient-centered visits**

Prepare and plan for the clinic visits of all patients on chronic opioid therapy. Support patient-centered, empathic communication for care of patients on chronic opioid therapy.



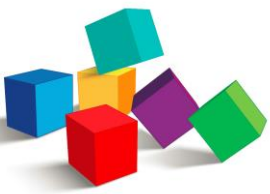
## **Caring for complex patients**

Develop policies and resources to ensure that patients who develop opioid use disorder and/or who need mental/behavioral health resources are identified and provided with appropriate care, either in the care setting or by outside referral.



## **Measuring success**

Continuously monitor progress and improve with experience.



# Roadmap and Team Support

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Our Six Building Blocks team coaches clinics over 12-15 months in:

- Forming an opioid improvement team
- Conducting a team-building Kickoff Event with a clinic-wide self-assessment of the Six Building Blocks
- Implementing evidence-based best practices in opioid management:
  - Revising policies and patient agreements
  - Creating workflows to support clinic policies
  - Developing a tracking and monitoring approach
  - Providing educational opportunities for staff and clinicians
  - Ensuring available resources for mental health and opioid use disorder



# External Support was Critical to the Clinics

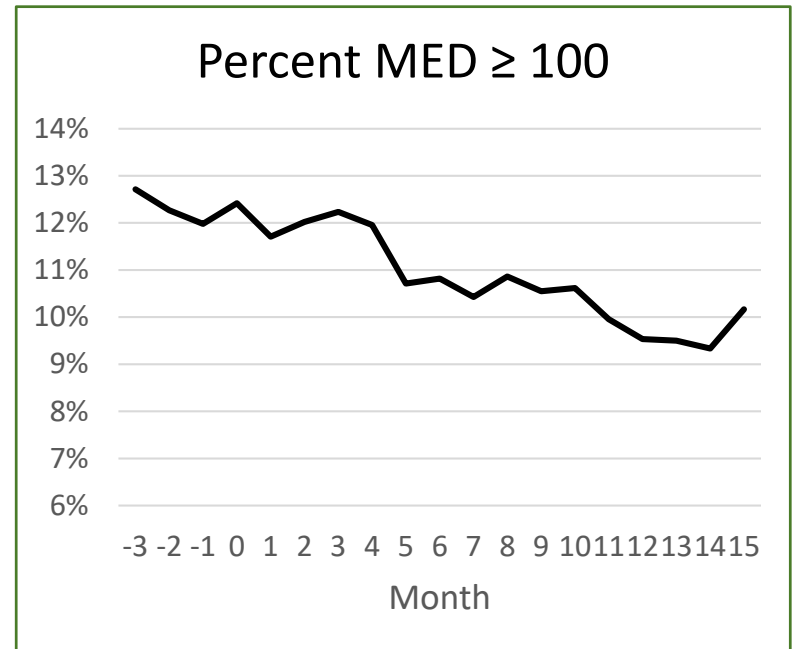
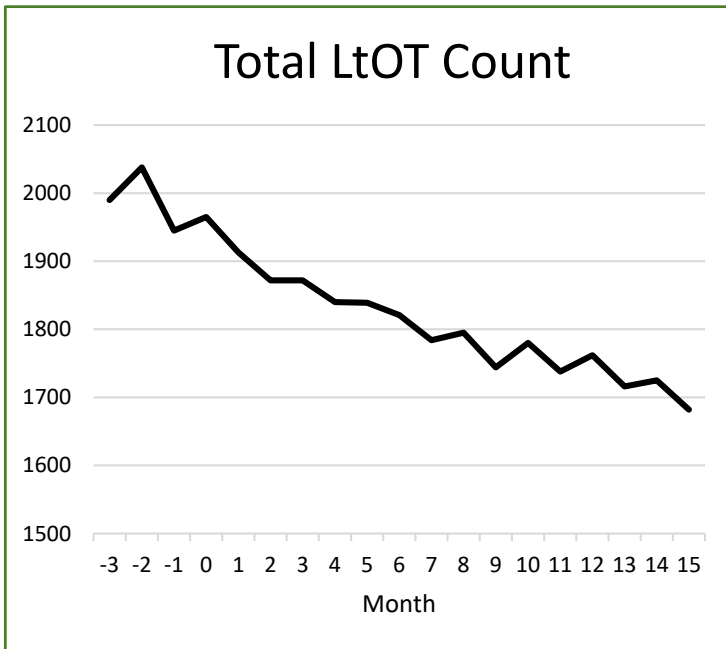
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- Technical Assistance: monthly check-ins and as needed
- Quarterly action planning meetings
- Monthly shared learning calls
- Webinars and difficult case presentations with pain specialist
- Sharing resources: model clinic policies and patient agreements, clinic workflows, patient education materials, etc.

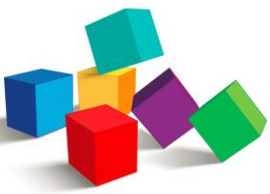


# Six Building Blocks Program Results

The number of patients using long term opioid therapy (LtOT) and the proportion on high dose opioids decreased







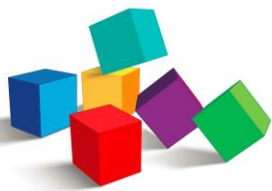
# Six Building Blocks Clinician & Staff Experiences

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*"Having a defined care pathway for an emotionally charged and complex area of care - to **walk in with a plan**. It's like walking into the ER and someone having a cardiac arrest. Not the most stressful thing I do because we have a clear plan. Now I have the same kind of **pathway for opioids**. Having what we are going to do defined."*

*"Everybody that works in this clinic says to me, 'Do you remember how much **turmoil** there was around it? **Wow, we don't have any of that anymore.**'"*

*"The thing that surprised me was the number of patients that once they started churning through the standard care pathway, that said, 'Wow, I get it,' and then a lot of them just ended up **tapering themselves** ahead of us. I just wasn't quite prepared to see the **patients engage.**"*



# Resources

HOME

6 BUILDING BLOCKS

SELF-ASSESSMENT

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

HELPFUL RESOURCES

ABOUT US



## Six Building Blocks

*A Team-Based Approach to Improving Opioid Management in Primary Care*



### What are the Six Building Blocks?

The Six Building Blocks program provides an evidence-based quality improvement roadmap to help primary care teams implement effective, guideline-driven care for their chronic pain and long-term opioid therapy patients.



### Who are the Six Building Blocks for?

The Six Building Blocks can help anyone who is interested in improving the care of patients using chronic opioid therapy, such as:

- practice coaches
- quality improvement personnel
- clinicians and staff
- clinic administrators



### What will you find on this website?

This website introduces the Six Building Blocks, provides tools and resources for improving care, and offers implementation guidance. Click "start here" to begin by learning more about the Six Building Blocks.

[START HERE](#)

[www.improvingopioidcare.org](http://www.improvingopioidcare.org)

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### Team-Based Clinic Redesign of Opioid Medication Management in Primary Care: Effect on Opioid Prescribing

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#### Abstract

**PURPOSE** Six key elements of opioid medication management redesign in primary care have been previously identified. Here, we examine the effect of implementing these Six Building Blocks on opioid-prescribing practices.

**METHODS** Six rural-serving organizations with 20 clinic locations received support for 15 months during the period October 2015 to May 2017 to implement the Six Building Blocks. Patients undergoing long-term opioid therapy (LIOT) at these study sites were compared with patients undergoing LIOT enrolled in a regional health plan who did not



# Six Building Blocks Team

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The Six Building Blocks team offers practice coaching, training on implementing the Six BBs in your organization. For more information, contact Laura-Mae Baldwin at [lmb@uw.edu](mailto:lmb@uw.edu).