



## **Opioids, Addiction, and the Med-Surg Nurse**

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**Summary:** In 2016, 63,632 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States, 42,249 (66.4%) of which involved opioids. According to the literature, nurses report a knowledge deficit related to substance use disorder which contributes to stigma and fear. Addiction to any substance including alcohol, opioids, and nicotine is the result of neurochemical interactions in the brain. The resulting behaviors can be life-threatening and emotionally destructive.

### **Nursing Implications:**

- Nurses have an opportunity to impact their patients' future behaviors with effective communication and a knowledge base of addiction and treatment options.
- Patients with substance use disorder often interact with healthcare providers.

### **Key Takeaways:**

- Screening brief intervention and referral to treatment model outlines evidence-based practice to care for patients with substance use disorder.
- Substance use disorder has a medical base.
- Medication assisted therapy in addition to psychological counseling can effectively treat addiction.
- Therapeutic communication with the patient can impact their future behaviors and promote a safer inpatient stay.
- Addiction is a chronic illness where remission and relapse are expected.

**Link:** <https://library.amsn.org/amsn/sessions/5183/view>

### **References:**

Substance abuse and mental health administration. SBIRT: Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment. Retrieved from: <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/SBIRT>.

*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Retrieved from: <http://dsm.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596.dsm18>.

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