



Attitude toward Subutex
take away doses
amongst QLD ATODS
SMOs

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- Rationale: Amongst different nations a varied attitude to pure buprenorphine exists.
- In France until January 2012 only Subutex was available. Subutex still represents over 95 percent of the sublingual buprenorphine market in France.

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- In Canada Subutex is unavailable and Suboxone has always been the sole buprenorphine opioid replacement product.
- In Australia both forms of Sublingual buprenorphine are available.

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- Because different countries have different attitudes to the availability of Subutex and Suboxone (through legislation) it is not unreasonable to suggest that a divergence of opinion might also exists amongst medical officers within the ATODS service in QLD.
- Such diverse opinions are postulated as likely because globally no consensus exists as to the availability of the two common buprenorphine formulations.

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- This presentation aims to present the views of a sample of ATODS Senior Medical Officers from across the state.
- It also references information from the harm reduction centre at Biala to highlight which forms of Buprenorphine are injected on historical data.

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- Methodology
- Permission was granted for the study by North Metro District Ethics Committee. Because of the sophisticated nature of the survey respondents only the low risk 17 page form needed to be completed.

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- Initially medical officers were interviewed in person, by phone or via email.
- 14 Medical Officers responded.

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- It was thought that the introduction of a third formulation of Buprenorphine, the film, provided a timely opportunity to review attitudes to the current formulations
- And...
- Also whether the new formulation makes a difference.

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- Smirnov and Kemp (2012) performed a retrospective observational study of data collected during 2000 to 2007 for clients obtaining injecting equipment from the Brisbane Harm reduction Centre.
- Result: Buprenorphine/naloxone combined product was misused at lower rates than buprenorphine and methadone.

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- However the misuse of opioid replacement therapies represented less than 5% of all prescribed opioids diverted and injected.

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- As a monthly average buprenorphine was by far the most injected ORT medication with 1700 needles and syringes provided followed by MMT 900 and Bup/Nx 350.

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- Expressed as the Number of presentations per month.
- Buprenorphine: 140
- MMT 170
- Bup/nx 42
- The total service occasions for all drugs per month was 6000 (50 percent of SEQ total injecting equipment).

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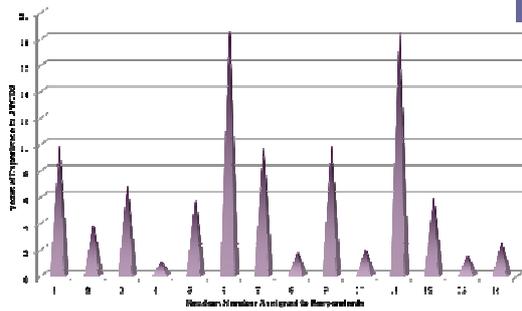
- When adjusted as presentations per 1000 dose unit prescribed. The units were
- Bup 7.8; MMT 1.9, Bup/Nx 1.2

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- Two conclusions then could be drawn.
- 1) ORT drug diversions are a small fraction of injected diverted pharmaceuticals.
- 2) Bup/Nx has about one fifth the diversion potential of buprenorphine.

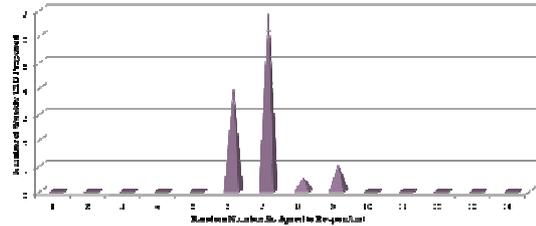
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How experienced are prescribers?



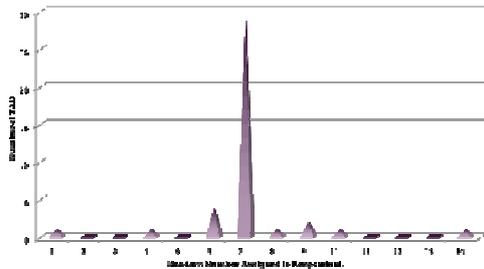
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How many weekly take away doses should a stable client on Subutex receive at the one month mark?



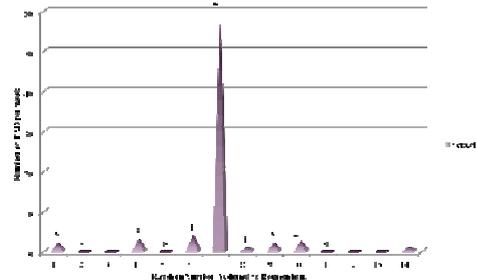
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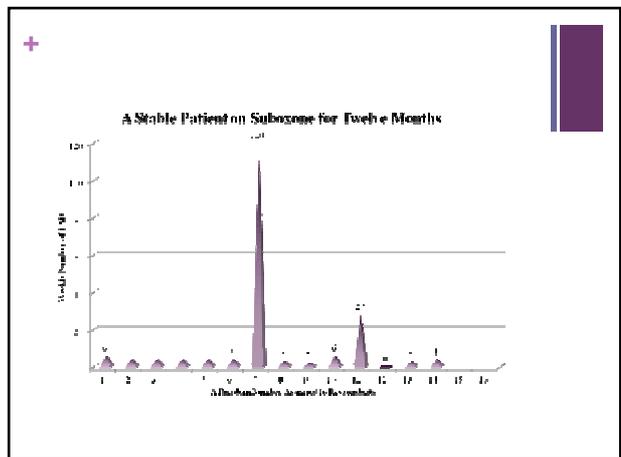
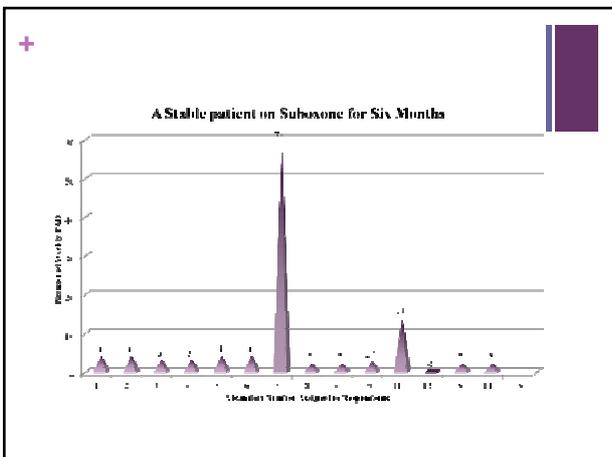
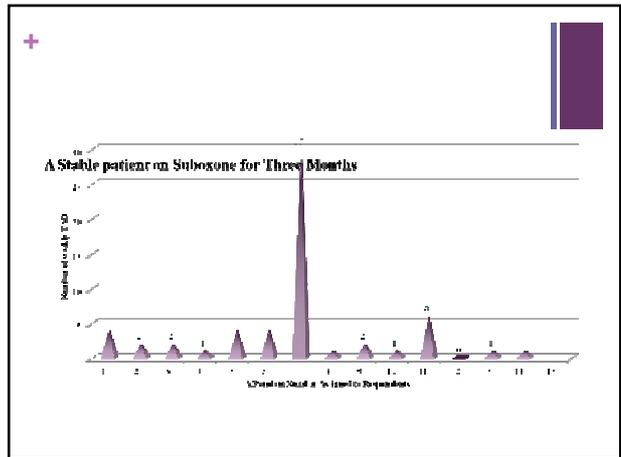
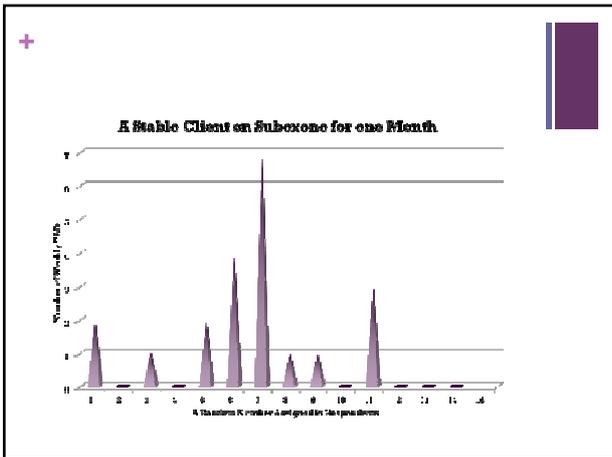
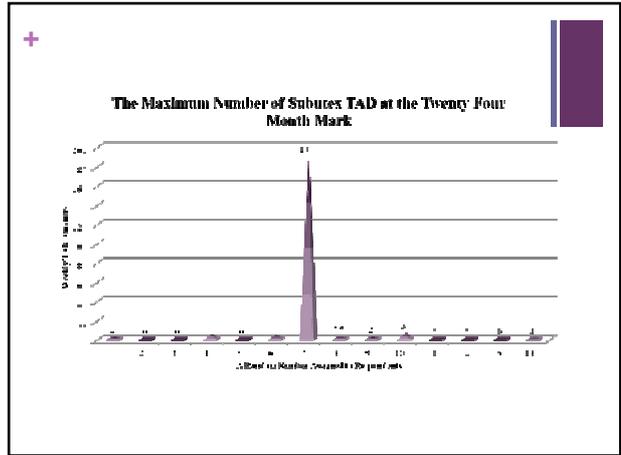
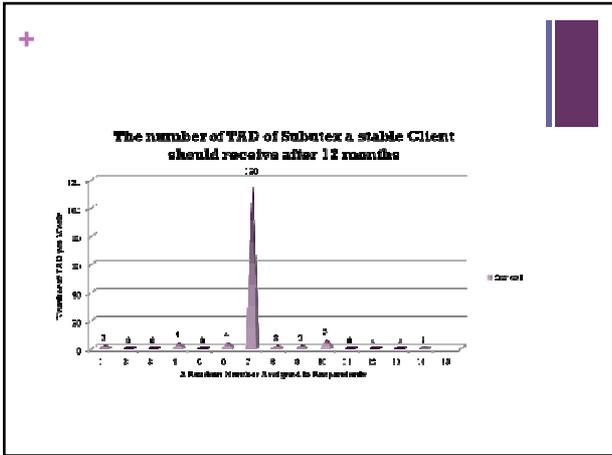
The Number of Take Away Doses that a New Client Should Receive at the Three Month Mark

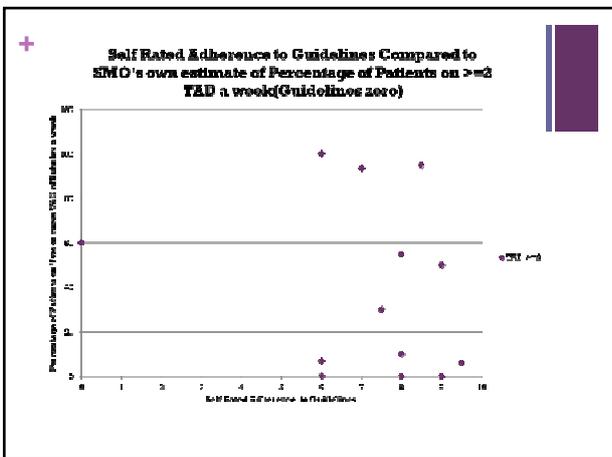
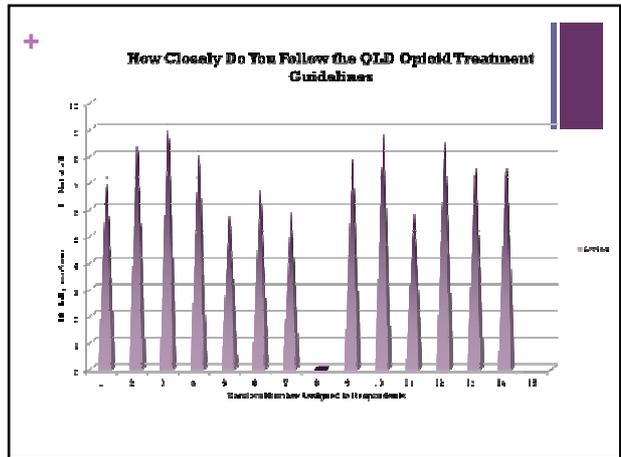
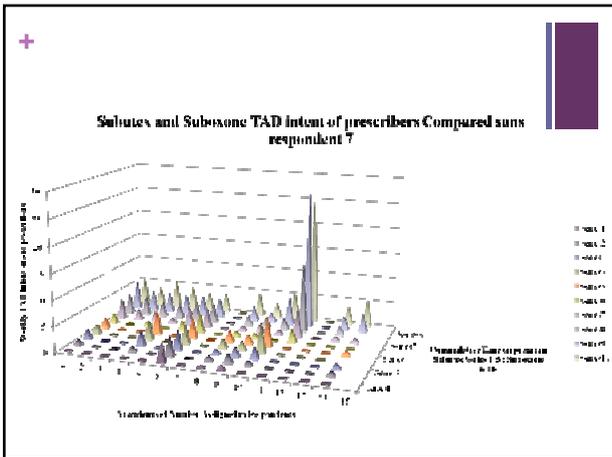
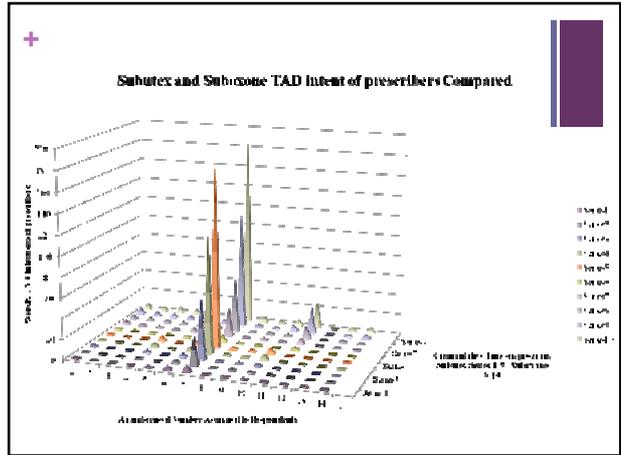
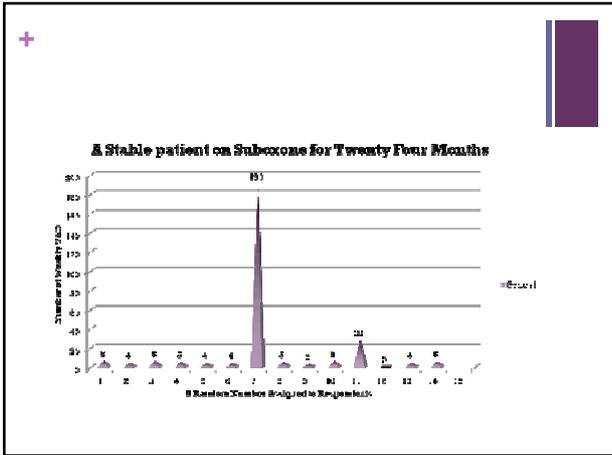


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The Number of Take Away Doses of Subutex that a stable Client Should Receive after Six Months on the Program







In Summary

- A diverse range of opinions to Subutex TAD exists amongst ATODS SMO's
- The SMO's self rated adherence to guidelines is perhaps higher than actual practice as a weak correlation only exists between this and actual self estimate of practice.

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- The majority of diverted pharmaceutical opioid 95 percent is not sourced from the opioid replacement program.
- However the majority of diverted opioid replacement medication is Subutex.
- Is it worth reducing TAD of Subutex in anticipation that this will reduce injecting of Subutex?

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- What will our clientele replace it with given that it is less than 5 percent of diverted opioid.
- Is restricting Subutex TAD a case of diminishing returns or is it a case of ever improving treatment similarly to atepalase replacing streptokinase.

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- One experienced prescriber's comment in the survey was very memorable to me.
- "I would have lost a lot less sleep at night if Subutex had been available twenty years ago!"

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Everything is relative

- Subutex is a very safe drug
- Because of its five fold less tendency to be injected Suboxone is safer again
- Perhaps Subutex's good safety profile has blinded us to the Great safety profile of Suboxone

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However

- Just as diversity in any biological population enhances that populations ability to adapt to change. I believe that the diversity of opinion amongst ATODS SMO is a sign of the intellectual strength of the ATOD SMO community.
- One small family of Chimpanzees has more genetic diversity than the entire human race.
- I like to think of our SMO community as healthy virile and genetically diverse!!!