

FAQ For H+H Virtual Bupe Clinic

What patients are we serving? Does the clinic serve people outside of the 5 boroughs? What if they are out of state but have residency in NYC?

Anyone and everyone in NYC. Our specific target population is individuals newly seeking treatment with suboxone. However, we also understand there will be gaps in coverage and will help any individual who needs assistance with their suboxone during this emergency declaration. Unfortunately we are only taking care of patients within the 5 boroughs.

For people currently out of state, we will provide care for if they have been seen at an H+H facility within the past year. If not, we will happily direct them where to find care near them.

Do you offer any other treatment besides suboxone (buprenorphine)? Can we take patients currently on methadone?

Suboxone (and various formulations) is the only medication we are currently offering for treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD). We will not be offering methadone or vivitrol currently. However, we will be able to prescribe as clinically appropriate other medications including narcan and smoking cessation medications.

Unfortunately, we cannot accept patients on methadone. However, regulations regarding methadone have loosened and guest dosing and take homes are being encouraged if clinically appropriate.

What if my patient does not have the audio-video capability and/or unlikely to be able to work the technology?

We anticipate that this may be the case for a quarter to a third of patients that we will be serving. Although I preferred method of care is via telehealth we will also have in person availability M-F 9-12 at Bellevue. This will be by appointment only. This location is in a separate building than our main hospital building decreasing the exposure to COVID19.

How soon can you see my patient?

We predict things will be rapidly be changing and that this will be a highly utilized service. To start we can “see” patients relatively quickly, if not the same day. As things get busier there may be a slight delay, but our goal will be to “see” patients within 24-48 hrs. This is all very fluid and we will try our best to provide care to all individuals seeking care.

Do you take patients who have been receiving bupe from another provider?

First) Contact the current clinic and ask for the prescriber’s coverage. Inform them that covering providers can conduct telephone visits for bupe refills

Second) If there is no coverage, the H+H virtual clinic can help them

- If the prior provider is within H+H – video is **not required** for initial visit, proceed with phone call
- If the prior provider is **not** within H+H – a video **is required** for initial visit
- If the patient was started on treatment from a non-x waived provider (e.g. in the ED) – video **is required** for initial visit
- If the patient was started on treatment with a CATCH provider – video is **not required** for initial visit, proceed with phone call.

How will they get their medications?

Our goal is to limit exposure for the patient, the provider, the healthcare system (including pharmacies), and the public at large while still providing high quality care that is safe and effective. One way we are doing this is by providing longer scripts than we might normally do (for instance a 4 week script vs 1 week). We may still schedule calls in between refills if clinically appropriate. We will try to encourage community pharmacies as opposed to hospital pharmacies, but will do what we need to ensure the individual receives their medications.

What insurance do you accept?

Fortunately, at Health + Hospitals, we put patient care above and before all else. Because of this we can take care of any patient regardless of insurance or ability to pay.

What happens after the COVID19 pandemic?

This is a temporary solution and only meant to provide short term care with the goal to transition patients to long term maintenance therapy at one of our many clinics at H+H or in the community as per the individual’s preference.

Who is staffing the clinic?

The providers are all x-waivered who have significant experience, if not fully boarded, in addiction medicine or addiction psychiatry. All providers are committed to this clinic and will scramble as needed to ensure patients get the care they need in a rapidly changing environment