

Opioid Use Disorder & Health Care: Skilled Nursing Facilities

People who take medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD), like methadone or buprenorphine, often experience illegal barriers to healthcare.

Admission to Skilled Nursing Facilities *(including nursing homes and long-term care facilities)*

People needing care at a skilled nursing facility (SNF) are often denied admission because they take methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder (OUD). The U.S. Department of Justice has stated that these practices are illegal discrimination.

Signs of discrimination include:

- SNF has a policy not to admit people taking methadone or buprenorphine
- SNF says someone must taper off of MOUD to be admitted
- SNF says it cannot provide the “type of services” someone with OUD needs
- SNF denies someone admission after commenting about their substance use

For help, call the Legal Action Center: (212) 243-1313

Visit LAC’s [MAT ADVOCACY TOOLKIT](#) for materials that can help you advocate!

How Skilled Nursing Facilities Can Provide Access to MOUD

SNFs *can* provide access to MOUD, and many do. Below are some ways SNFs may facilitate access to methadone and buprenorphine:

- Any SNF practitioner – or the patient’s community practitioner – may prescribe buprenorphine if they have a DEA registration with authority to prescribe controlled substances
- The SNF can bring patients to their opioid treatment program (OTP) for methadone doses
- Methadone may be transported from an OTP to a SNF
- SNFs may store and administer MOUDs the same way they do other controlled substances unless the State imposes specific requirements
- If the SNF is registered with the DEA as a hospital or clinic, it can provide methadone directly to patients admitted for treatment of a medical condition other than OUD (42 CFR §§ 8.2 and 8.11(h)(3))

For more information, visit [Medications for the Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder](#) and this [toolkit](#).

This document is informational and does not constitute legal advice.