



# RISE ABOVE IT TOGETHER

**You-Me-They-US...**  
**Rise Above It Together**  
~ *Opioid Treatment Referrals* ~

**We envision** a community where we all **live in equality**,  
feeling accepted, valued, safe, and **free from social stigma**.

**Our mission is to serve, empower, and advocate for North County's diverse LGBTQI community**



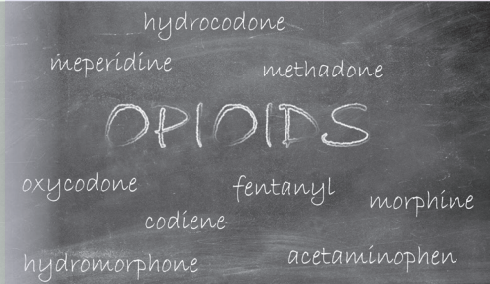
visit [www.samsha.gov](http://www.samsha.gov)

The North County LGBTQ+ Resource Center received grant funding from Sierra Health Foundation to build an *inclusive educational campaign about addiction*, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) options, and to provide referrals and resources.

## What are Opioids?

Opioids are a **class of drugs that include heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available by prescription**, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, and others.

All opioids are chemically related and interact with opioid receptors on nerve cells in the body and brain. Opioid pain relievers are generally safe when taken for a short time and as prescribed by a doctor, but because they produce euphoria in addition to pain relief, they can be misused (taken in a different way or in a larger quantity than prescribed, or taken without a doctor's prescription).



## What is Opioid addiction?

Regular use of opioids—even as prescribed by a doctor—can lead to **dependence** and, when misused, opioid pain relievers can lead to addiction, overdose incidents, and death.

Addiction is a problematic pattern that **causes significant impairments at work, school, or home, among other criteria or distress, such as unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control use, social problems, and a failure to fulfill obligations**. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, over 2.1 million Americans suffer from Opioid Use Disorder.

An opioid overdose can be reversed by the drug naloxone, when given right away. However, since 2015, overdose deaths involving heroin and fentanyl increased dramatically.

Individuals using meth have high risk of exposure to fentanyl, sometimes used to 'cut' meth and leading to overdose and death. Test strips are available that can detect the presence of fentanyl.

Opioid-involved overdose deaths rose significantly from 46,802 deaths in 2018 to 49,860 in 2019  
Source: National Vital Statistics System, CDC

## What are the statistics for our LGBTQ+ family?

We are at higher risk to move from recreational use to an addiction disorder diagnosis. An estimated **25% of the LGBTQ community abuses substances**, compared to about 9% the population as a whole. **LGBTQ individuals are 9.5 times more likely to use heroin than heterosexual individuals**. In our LGBTQ+ family, substance use disorders often develop from self-medication, numbing of feelings, or trauma.



## How does Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) work?

Fortunately, **effective medications exist to treat opioid use disorders, including methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone**. These medications do not replace the drug. They work very differently within the body, and help to reduce addiction cravings and withdrawal symptoms. When taken as prescribed, these medications are safe and effective. MAT can help individuals to achieve and sustain recovery, and to reclaim active and meaningful lives.

## Treatment is never one size fits all... Let's Rise Above It TOGETHER.

**Medication is one part of a program that includes counseling and case management.** MAT providers working to meet the needs of the LGBTQ+ community also address any underlying elements that may have caused an addiction. This is instrumental to the recovery process. Programs tailored for the LGBTQ community show better outcomes because they address unique factors such as homophobia/transphobia, bullying, family problems, violence, sexual health, homelessness and social isolation.

## Resources in North County San Diego:

North County Serenity House  
(serves women)  
**442.888.5817**  
[www.healthright360.org](http://www.healthright360.org)

Soap MAT  
**760.305.7528**  
[www.soapmat.org](http://www.soapmat.org)

TrueCare Community Clinic  
**760.736.6767**  
[www.truecare.org](http://www.truecare.org)

Vista Community Clinic MAT  
**844.308.5003**  
[www.vcc.org](http://www.vcc.org)



To learn more info, visit [www.samsha.gov](http://www.samsha.gov)