

### **SHM Position on Buprenorphine Deregulation**

The Society of Hospital Medicine supports the deregulation of buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder. Buprenorphine is currently a Schedule III controlled substance but has restrictions placed upon its use for this indication. We believe these unnecessary obstacles preclude the recruitment of a more robust prescriber base, inhibit widespread provider adoption, and propagate the stigma of treating this population of patients. We support the passage of legislation removing this additional requirement. We believe the benefits of increased treatment retention, decreased illicit opioid use, and decreased overdose risk outweigh the potential risk of increased diversion (Lancet 2019; 393: 1760–72).

Additionally, we support eliminating the "X Waiver" DEA certificate and the provider-patient cap related to it. SHM supports the ability of any DEA-certificate holder to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder similar to other controlled substances, commensurate with State and Federal law. Opioid addiction and treatment require the same efforts medical practitioners direct towards all our public health emergencies, including complete access to beneficial and safe treatments. Buprenorphine is a beneficial, safe, and life-saving therapy that medical practitioners require to meet the exigency of the opiate crisis.

*Approved by SHM Board of Directors May 2019*