

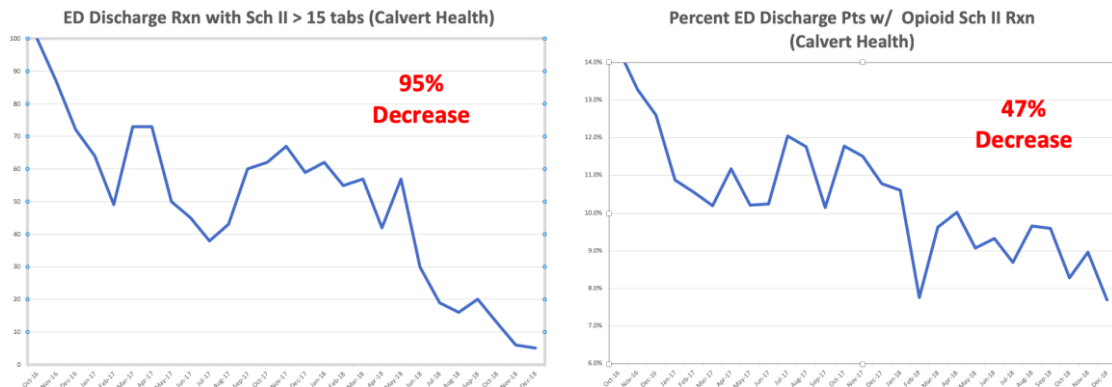
Maryland Emergency Departments are Helping Lead the Way with Safer Opioid Prescribing

Many of the state's Emergency Departments are making significant gains in safe opioid prescribing and can serve as models for other healthcare sectors and practices. National studies have shown that the variability of opioid prescribing within and amongst emergency departments can be wide. A recent publication reported that up to 25% patients with the diagnosis of ankle sprain received an opioid prescription. It is alarming that studies have also demonstrated that exposure to opioids from the ED can lead to long term use.

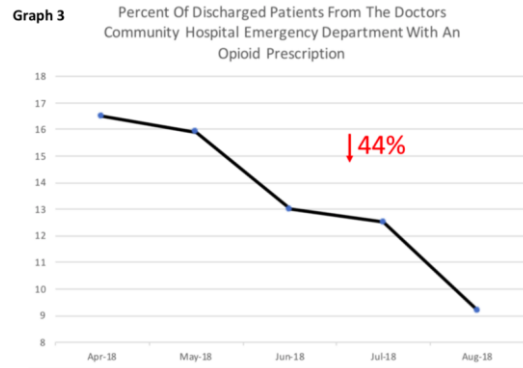
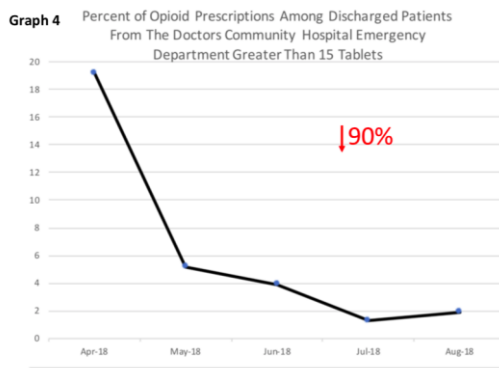
While many healthcare facilities are aiming to more closely standardize opioid prescribing, there is concern of presumed resistance by clinicians and patients. Some clinicians may even express apprehension about adversely impacting patient satisfaction.

We have found hospitals can achieve substantial and safe reductions in ED opioid prescribing while maintaining high levels of patient satisfaction and clinician engagement. **Calvert Health Medical Center** and **Doctors Community Hospital** have both achieved high levels of success by implementing simple but impactful interventions.

Calvert Health Medical Center (Prince Frederick, Maryland)



Doctors Community Hospital (Lanham, Maryland)



Key Interventions for emergency department and hospital safer prescribing success:

- 1) Establish a hospital Opioid Stewardship Committee
 - Align goals, teams and implementations
- 2) Implement best practice opioid prescribing guidelines
 - ED, Hospital, Post-Op, Clinical Practices
- 3) Disseminate tools that promote the utilizations of Alternatives to Opioids (ALTO)
- 4) Educate staff and leadership
 - Physicians, mid-level providers, nursing, pharmacy
- 5) Promote practices and goals to the community
 - e.g. pamphlets with patient resources and practice goals, newspaper articles
- 6) Measure prescribing and provide feedback to leadership and individual clinicians.
 - Transparency should be supported.

These are multi-disciplinary team efforts that require senior executive and departmental leadership support. The successes demonstrated here were achieved because of numerous leaders at Calvert Health (Kara Harrer, PharmD, Stephanie Dabulis, MD), Doctors Community Hospital (Salim Jarawan, PharmD, Denise Doherty, RN, Puneet Chopra, MD), and Emergency Medicine Associates (John Sverha, MD, Darren Morris, MD, Martin Brown, MD). We believe that all Maryland hospitals have great teams that can improve safer prescribing and utilization of opioid medications.

While the goal is always to manage pain appropriately and safely, engaging simple best practices and committing to impactful metrics can help all of us get there.

Drew Fuller, MD, MPH (Calvert Health)

Dan Case, MD (Doctors Community Hospital)

