

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VALLEY VIEW REDUCES OPIOID ADMINISTRATION BY 23 PERCENT IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

September 13, 2018, GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLO – Valley View has joined the Colorado ALTO Project to reduce the administration of opioids in the hospital's emergency department (ED).

Colorado is at the forefront of the nation's opioid epidemic with the twelfth highest rate of prescription opioid misuse and abuse out of all 50 states. Colorado hospitals, particularly the EDs, are in a strong position to integrate more effective pain management treatments that are tailored to each patient's unique pain experience.

Valley View's goal is to improve pain management for its patients and return them to a maximum quality of life while also recognizing and controlling the inherent risks of prescribing highly addictive medications like opioids. The Colorado ALTO Project is an initiative based on the successful Colorado Hospital Association Opioid Safety Pilot, where a cohort of ten hospital ED's decreased the administration of opioids by 36 percent, while increasing the use of alternatives to opioids (ALTOs). The ED at Valley View began their work in October 2017 as one of the first ED's beyond the initial ten pilot sites to test the reproducibility of the initial results.

Valley View implemented components from the 2017 Opioid Prescribing and Treatment Guidelines developed by the Colorado Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). These guidelines include using alternatives to opioids (ALTO's) as a first line of defense in treating patients with painful conditions prior to resorting to opioids.

Laurale Cross, Emergency Department Administrative Director at Valley View, says that there has been a decrease in patients being administered opioids in the ED due to new protocols and education. The ED has seen a 23 percent decrease in opioid prescriptions in the last six months. In addition to collecting the baseline data necessary for measuring the reduction in Morphine Equivalent Units (MEU's), she also provides data feedback to prescribers on their patterns compared to their peers.

"The keys to success for us were implementing a data repository that included what prescriptions were provided and the dose, personalizing the stories of the patients who were being harmed by opioids, and the leadership of our nurses who stepped up and championed using alternatives to opioids," Cross says. "The overall goal is to build a system-wide approach that includes engaging patients and family, hospitalists, and primary care providers who share in the care of the patients to assure the entire system is aware of and adapting non-opioid pain management protocols so the work of the ED is sustained wherever a patient gets care in the Glenwood Springs community."

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has recently selected Valley View from amongst hundreds of organizations to be interviewed to help inform the national guidelines for the Opioid Management Change Package. The goal of the Change Package is to provide tools and approaches that local clinical practices, hospitals, health care systems and providers can utilize to better measure, predict, anticipate, and solve when treating patients using opioids.

Cross encourages other health organizations to jump in feet first when it comes to changing opioid prescribing patterns. “If you try something and it doesn’t work, try something else,” she says. “We rolled the dice. Make the change and see what happens.”

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About Valley View

Valley View is a private, not-for-profit health system based in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. Founded in 1955 with funds raised by the community, Valley View Hospital has evolved into an 80-bed multi-disciplinary facility providing a broad spectrum of health services with an integrated network of specialty centers and physician practices, including comprehensive cancer care, an interventional cardiology center and neurosurgical and orthopaedic care. Valley View Care Centers are also located in Eagle, Silt and Willits. Local events and outreach efforts include community health fairs, blood drives, a physician-led education series, a kids and teen safety fair, and Rally the Valley, the signature event of the Valley View Foundation. Valley View is designated as a Planetree facility, representing the highest level of achievement in person-centered care. Valley View has been recognized for performance excellence from Healthgrades, J.D. Power & Associates, Truven Health “Top 100 Hospitals”, Survey Vitals and Consumer Reports. PeopleCare. That’s Valley View. www.vvh.org<<http://www.vvh.org>>.