

COVID-19 / Mental Health Questions & Answers: Calgary Zone

Date Updated: Feb 1, 2021

General themes covered by this document:

- Alcohol use disorder
- COVID-19:
 - vaccine update
 - vaccine delivery in Alberta
 - vaccine hesitancy

| Question | Answer |
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| Theme: Alcohol use disorder | |
| 1. What about giving vitamin B to those with AUD? Or seroquel? | Give Thiamine (100mg) and folic acid Some evidence in using Seroquel for alcohol-withdrawal |
| 2. BCCSU states that Gabapentin is a 2nd line Rx, would you use gabapentin in patients without neuropathy or sz? Or, pt with a history of chronic pain? | I often use Gabapentin in patients with a history of chronic pain, even if they don't have seizure |
| 3. Based on AUD pathway, Naltrexone can be given above 50 mg. What is your opinion? | Yes I have given more than 50 mg, which is off label, especially if comorbid gambling addiction, and also helps for flashbacks from PTSD. |
| 4. Which do you treat first mood disorder or substance use disorder, or do you treat simultaneously? | Treat both at the same time- leads to better outcomes for both - eg FMC outpatient program |
| 5. After hx of AUD, what about controlled drinking? | If you have neurological pathways for addiction developed, it is easy to relapse – this is a conversation with the patient. |
| 6. I'd like to know your thoughts on the benefits of Contrave for alcohol addiction. | Contrave does contain Naltrexone combined with Wellbutrin. You would think this would help with alcohol use disorder, but I don't know if they have done specific studies on this. |
| 7. Any concern about sending people with AUD alone to one of the private sites that treat AUD | Sometimes that occurs, but rare as staff do monitor for same. If they need detox or sober housing, please do not let that concern stop you from referring. |

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| and SUD (detox and residential facilities)? what is the risk of the person being introduced to additional substances? | |
| 8. How do you counsel patients with AUD who want to use THC for their sleep and anxiety? | Risk of cross addiction so it would be recommended to avoid it |
| 9. Is there a reference you would recommend with respect to risk of using THC with AUD ? | Primarily textbook chapters regarding cross addiction and the addiction pathway, I can't think of a reference paper off the top of my head though. The Textbook of Addiction Treatment International Perspectives- Volume 1, has a great chapter on the neurobiology of addiction if you want to check it out at the U of C library. There was one paper I found by Yurasek A in 2017 "Co-use of alcohol and cannabis: a review." in Current Addiction Reports that may answer your questions. |
| 10. Other supports? | Reminder about the ACFP Collaborative network for chronic pain and addiction for family docs and allied health teams for those wanting peer to peer support |
| Theme: COVID-19 vaccine update | |
| 11. One of my patients lives abroad and has been offered a "Chinese vaccine". He wants to know when he returns to Canada can he still receive the mRNA vaccine in Canada? | There is not a contradiction for getting a Health Canada approved vaccine regardless of prior administration |
| 12. Patients are worried that somehow these vaccines will get inside their own DNA and create problems. Is this possible and how do we discuss with them? | None of the vaccines approved - or those three new candidates reported today will impact DNA. RNA vaccines are short lived as are those viral DNA vaccines that don't incorporate into host |
| 13. Does cell mediated immunity decline in older people? | Yes cell mediated immunity also declines over time |
| 14. What does the sensitivity of a vaccine mean, is 66% less effective then 97% | It is difficult to truly be able to compare vaccine data due to differences in methodology and event rate in the studies - the outcomes are different and the time frame in which they are reported is different. the true efficacy will be determined over time |
| 15. I am hearing lots of questions about cancer patients whether there is increased risk for COVID-19 and whether there are any concerns about use of the vaccines? | Special populations including those with HIV, active chemotherapy are an area being pursued in many studies ... It is too soon to say if they will require something special. But do need vaccination. |

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| 16. Headlines like "Highly contagious COVID 19 variants" reported by Dr. Hinshaw. How do we counter the fear this induces? | It is a tough balance between staying on top of emerging science - with potential for flaws - and staying safe. Hopefully this will at least counter precaution exhaustion that is occurring |
| Theme: COVID-19 vaccine delivery | |
| 17. Who do we contact if we want to volunteer to give vaccines? | Ed Les |
| 18. How soon can we expect the next round of vaccinations? Any ideas? | No timeline right now as needed to pause. Senior aged >75 living anywhere and Metis >65 was supposed to be Phase 1a but current priority is giving 2nd dose to those who received 1st dose and doses to LTC/SL residents. |
| 19. How will family doctors be notified about getting our vaccines? Are we in line for vaccine in an upcoming phase? | I hope so and we are advocating for it. We will likely use various structures to notify docs, through PCNs, CPSA, AMA and AHS |
| 20. How will those 75 over etc, be notified/invited, are FPs able to help by pulling lists and reaching out to these folks? ie. Do they call to book/online booking, and where do they go? Will they get a phone call? | That is exactly what we are pushing for, we recognize the huge value in proactively going through the medical home, even if there is parallel robust public communication from government. I doubt there will be direct calls or emails to the public, it will be more like the influenza campaigns. |
| 21. What is going to happen to people who got first dose if they can't get second dose in 42 days? Like our colleagues and LTC patients? | Some evidence those timelines aren't as important as initially thought, we are doing everything possible to ensure they get the second dose within the time period |
| 22. How does the committee involved at role out obtain contact information? Eg. for Home Care Workers, 1A role out, is the govt just focused on AHS staff? What about PCN staff who do Home Visits? | The committee doesn't decide that kind of detail, AHS and other partners will have to be involved in communication. We are advocating for PCN staff |
| Theme: COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy | |
| 23. How to deal with conspiracy theories? | Validate the emotion, do not try to argue facts. "Don't fight feelings with facts". |
| 24. Do you think current scarcity will increase acceptance? | It is hard to say |
| 25. Could you please share the PrOTCT slide? | The slides are available on SpecialistLINK website |