

CODE RECOVER

Transfer of Care: Warm Handoff and Follow-Up — Quick Reference

The Warm Handoff

A **warm handoff** is a personal, active transfer of care — before the patient leaves, they need a confirmed appointment, a way to get there, and a real person waiting for them.

- **Immediate Connection** — call the receiving clinic/RCO while the patient is still in the room
- **Logistics Check** — ride? working phone? Solve it now if not 
- **Pharmacy Check** — confirm the pharmacy has buprenorphine in stock
- **First Dose Orientation** — explain what the next 24 hours will feel like
- **Follow-Up** — call within 24 hours to confirm the plan held

Close the loop: update the clinical team once follow-up is secured.

Post-ED Follow-Up

Window of risk: overdose risk peaks in the first 24–72 hours post-discharge — staying connected is protective.

- **Pharmacy Check** — did they get the medication? If not, why?
- **Physical Check** — how are they feeling on MOUD? Signs of precipitated withdrawal?
- **Emotional Check** — overwhelmed? A familiar voice can keep them committed. 

No-shows are a sign a barrier was too high, not a failure — reach out immediately, stay persistent and supportive.

Close the loop: alert the next site of care on any no-show or hurdle.