# ENHANCING NURSE-LED INITIATION OF HEADACHE AND ALCOHOL WITHDRAWAL ORDER SETS IN UHN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

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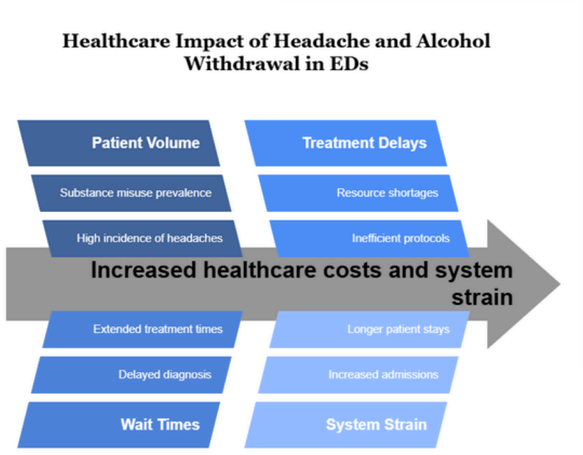
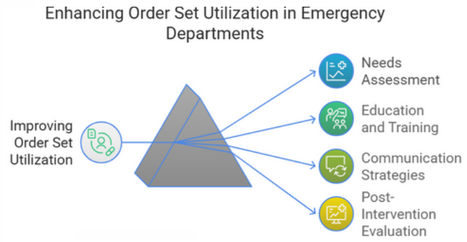
## BACKGROUND

Headache and alcohol withdrawal are common Emergency Department (ED) complaints. On average, nearly 84,000 patients present to EDs across Canada with headache complaints. In Ontario alone, between 2013-2016, this number was over 765,000 for substance misuse/withdrawal. Wait times and treatment delays for both these complaints lead to repeated visits, avoidable admissions and increased lengths of stay, negatively impacting the healthcare system. Costs associated with substance use issues alone add an estimated $5.4 billion annually in healthcare costs.




## METHODS




***Needs assessment***: 12-month baseline data was obtained for headache and substance withdrawal order set use. Substance withdrawal complaints were manually reviewed to identify alcohol withdrawal specifically. Nurses' knowledge and confidence in initiating order sets were also measured using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire.

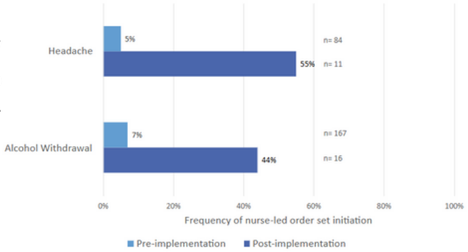
***Implementation***: Targeted education, coaching and practice reinforcement was employed by unit Clinical Resource Nurses to disseminate information and encourage nurse initiation of headache and alcohol withdrawal order sets. Epic's Secure Chat was formatted with templates to be used as a standardized method of communication between nurses and providers.

***Reinforcement:*** Posters (as shown below) were placed in high visibility areas. Internal communications tools such as the "Friday Files" and team huddles were used to reinforce the education and further disseminate information about order sets.

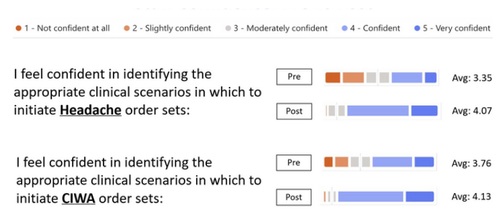

***Post-Implementation:*** Epic data was collected on order set usage, and a post survey was conducted to measure nurses' knowledge and confidence levels.

## RESULTS

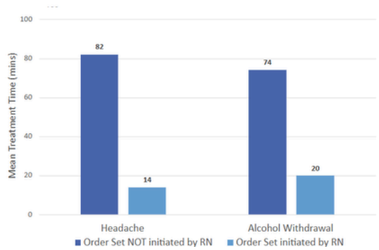
### Results: Nurse-led Order Set Initiation



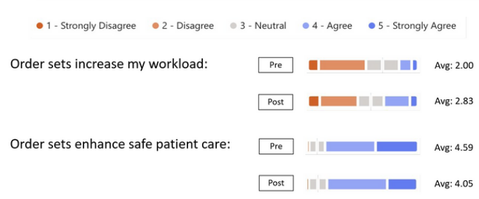

### Staff Confidence: Pre vs Post



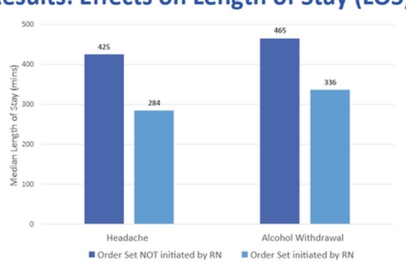

### Results: Effects on Time to First Treatment




### Staff Perception: Pre vs Post




### Results: Effects on Length of Stay (LOS)




## CONCLUSION


## PROJECT & AIM

Order sets are standardized collections of treatment orders related to a specific clinical complaint/situation. They are evidence-based and proven to reduce variations in care, as well as save clinicians' time. The UHN Emergency departments currently have 19 order sets available to use for patient care, including those for the management of headache and alcohol withdrawal, which were the two order sets of focus for this project. Despite being available for use, lack of training and awareness by staff, combined with practice changes in recent years led to a decrease in nurse initiation of order sets - a practice that would allow patients to begin receiving treatment sooner while still waiting to be assessed by an ED provider.

**The aim of this QI project was to increase nurse-led initiation of headache and alcohol withdrawal order sets, prior to ED provider assessment, to 10% by March 2025 at UHN Emergency Departments.**

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