



**ASAM** American Society of  
Addiction Medicine

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## **Addiction Medicine Experts Convene in DC to Advance Three Meaningful Policies Addressing America's Addiction and Overdose Crisis**

*While addiction and overdose continue to impose immense social and economic costs on America, leading organizations representing addiction specialist physicians and associated healthcare professionals urge Congress to enact meaningful policy changes to save and improve more lives.*

**Rockville, MD** – Today, national organizations representing addiction specialist physicians and associated healthcare professionals convened a conference to highlight critical federal legislation urgently needed to address American's addiction and overdose crisis. The **Addiction Medicine Advocacy Conference (AMAC)**, hosted by the **American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)** in coordination with the **American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT)**, the **American College of Academic Addiction Medicine (ACAAM)**, and the **National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)**, brings together leading addiction medicine experts and advocates in the field to discuss pressing issues that drive low addiction treatment and high overdose rates.

The conference imparts the urgent need to advocate for meaningful legislation to address the [low utilization rates for medications for opioid use disorder \(MOUD\)](#). This comes in the context of potential [new restrictions on telemedicine prescribing of MOUD](#) and antiquated restrictions on one such medication, [methadone, which is uniquely useful in addressing the fentanyl crisis](#). Additionally, there is a [major gap in Medicare coverage of residential addiction treatment's](#) structured 24-hour regimen of care.

AMAC attendees will meet with Members of Congress and their staff to advance a bold policy agenda designed to close the existing treatment gap that affects millions of Americans struggling with addiction, and (1) maintain telemedicine access to addiction medications; (2) modernize access to methadone treatment for opioid use disorder, and (3) cover residential addiction

treatment under Medicare. Attendees will advocate for these legislative measures to create powerful changes ensuring more individuals can access medically appropriate and necessary addiction care.

The magnitude of loss from drug overdose for Americans is immense, with [over one million dying from overdose since 1999, and almost one in three US adults knowing someone who died from a drug overdose](#). With the United States recording [over 100,000 drug overdose deaths](#) last year, the advocates will urge policymakers to respond accordingly and swiftly pass legislation that would further support treatment and recovery for Americans with addiction. Specifically, they will highlight the critical need to:

- **Co-sponsor the TREATS Act (H.R. 5163 / S. 3193)**. This legislation would make **permanent existing audio-video and audio-only telehealth evaluation exceptions** to the Ryan Haight Act's in-person exam requirement **for initiating Schedule III-V medications approved for the treatment of substance use disorder (SUD)**, including buprenorphine.
- **Co-sponsor the Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act (MOTAA) (H.R.1359 / S. 644)**. MOTAA would allow addiction specialist physicians to **prescribe methadone for opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment that can be picked up at community pharmacies**, subject to federal rules or guidance on supply of methadone for unsupervised use.
- Co-sponsor the **Residential Recovery for Seniors Act (H.R. 9232 / S. 4860)**. This first-of-its-kind legislation **would create a Medicare Part A benefit for residential addiction treatment programs meeting nationally recognized standards**, categorized as Level 3.1: Clinically Managed Low-intensity Residential Treatment; Level 3.5: Clinically Managed High-intensity Residential Treatment, and/or Level 3.7: Medically Managed Residential Treatment. It would also **establish a prospective payment system** for these programs, ensuring that reimbursement for covered residential addiction treatment services is based on pre-determined, fixed amounts.

Data released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [highlights a significant treatment gap for individuals with SUD](#), underscoring the urgent need to improve access to evidence-based addiction care and close the treatment gap:

- In 2023, over 54 million people aged 12 or older needed substance use treatment in the past year, yet only 12.8 million received any form of treatment.
- Among individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD), SAMHSA reports a mere 18 percent received treatment with medications in 2023, despite the availability of three FDA-approved medications for OUD.
- Notably, approximately 6 percent of people aged 12 or older in 2023 who had an SUD in the past year received SUD treatment via telehealth.

"It is devastating to witness America's addiction and overdose crisis every day when we know how to treat addiction and save lives," said **Dr. Brian Hurley, president of the American Society of Addiction Medicine**. "Congress must meet the moment and act. With meaningful policies –

including maintaining telemedicine access to addiction medications, modernizing access to methadone treatment for opioid use disorder, and covering residential addiction treatment under Medicare – we can prevent thousands more from dying and save and improve more lives.”

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**About the American Society of Addiction Medicine**

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), founded in 1954, is a professional medical society representing over 7,000 physicians, clinicians and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public, supporting research and prevention and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. For more information, visit [www.ASAM.org](http://www.ASAM.org).