



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

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ASAM Statement on Executive Order Designating Fentanyl as a Weapon of Mass Destruction

Protect the lives of Americans through bold policies that unlock access to addiction treatment

Rockville, MD – In response to the Executive Order [“Designating Fentanyl as a Weapon of Mass Destruction,”](#) Stephen M. Taylor, MD, MPH, DFAPA, DFASAM, president of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), issued the following statement:

"If fentanyl is a weapon of mass destruction, then the moral test facing our government is whether it will protect Americans and save lives.

Illicit fentanyl can cause sudden death, making rapid access to evidence-based care for people with opioid use disorder (OUD) involving fentanyl non-negotiable. Strategies proven to decrease lethality, like increasing access to medications for OUD, particularly methadone, should be mission-critical if we hope to make America safe and healthy.

To protect Americans from the harms of illicit fentanyl, the government has a duty to address the ongoing system failures and regulatory red tape that prevent individuals with addiction from receiving lifesaving care. This includes fixing unacceptable payer delays and denials for evidence-based treatments. Medicare [must cover](#) residential addiction treatment that meets nationally recognized standards, and restrictions on Medicaid coverage for this care must be lifted.

Congress must also pass the [Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act](#), which would unlock access to methadone through physicians who are the nation's experts in treating addiction. Methadone's unique properties make it a [highly effective](#) medication treatment for patients with OUD involving fentanyl.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services must ensure that Medicaid expansion coverage for people with substance use disorders is protected by maximizing H.R.1's related exemption from the bureaucracy of "community engagement" compliance so there are no unnecessary barriers to their care. Strengthening the addiction treatment workforce and enforcing insurance parity for mental health and addiction treatment are other essential policy steps to ensure treatment is readily available and accessible to Americans in need.

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Americans deserve bold policy actions that invest in their health, promote a path to recovery, and deliver lifesaving care.”

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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 8,000 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.