



2019-02

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS THE USE OF FDA APPROVED AND EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT) FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER IN COUNTY JAILS

Background

In response to the opioid epidemic gripping this country, significant resources to treat Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) have been allocated by federal and state governments across the country. In December 2016, as part of the 21st Century Cures Act, Congress appropriated \$500 million in grants to the states to treat OUD, which can then be passed down to providers as well as local and tribal governments. This and other funding can be utilized to provide treatment, including Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), to incarcerated persons.(or justice-involved populations).

WHEREAS, our nation's Sheriffs oversee the vast majority of local jails and, as such, have the responsibility to maintain the safety and security of the facility for all who live and work within; and,

WHEREAS, more than 10 million individuals pass through our nation's jails annually; and,

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that more than 50% of inmates meet the medical criteria for drug dependence or abuse,ⁱ with adults on parole or supervised release from jail being nearly 3 times more likely to be dependent on or to abuse a substance than their peers;ⁱⁱ and,

WHEREAS, the criminal justice system is the largest source of referral to addiction treatment;ⁱⁱⁱ and,

WHEREAS, criminal justice-related costs due to prescription opioid overdose, abuse, and dependence reached approximately \$7.7 billion annually;^{iv} and,

WHEREAS, OUDs are often associated with a revolving door of arrest, incarceration, and release to the streets untreated or undertreated, followed by rearrests and return to incarceration or death; and,

WHEREAS, according to a report by the National Association of Counties and National League of Cities, individuals with opioid dependence who receive little or no treatment while incarcerated are likely to relapse to opioid dependence and criminal behavior, overdose and too often death; comprehensive drug-treatment programs in jails are associated with reduced system costs;^v and,

WHEREAS, evidence strongly supports that the use of MAT increases the likelihood of successful treatment for individuals with OUDs^{vi}; and,

This resolution was adopted by the membership of the National Sheriffs' Association on June 17, 2019, at the Annual Conference of the National Sheriffs' Association, in Louisville, Kentucky. The resolution shall remain in effect until June 17, 2023, in accordance with Article XIII, Section 6, of the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Sheriffs' Association.

WHEREAS, MAT, a combination of medications and behavioral interventions have been shown to decrease opioid use, increase treatment retention, reduce overdose, and reduce criminal activity^{vii}; and,

WHEREAS, MAT, utilizing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medications methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone—and either methadone or buprenorphine in pregnant individuals—, is considered a central component of the contemporary standard of care for the treatment of individuals with (OUDs)^{viii}; and,

WHEREAS, jails can minimize the risk of postrelease overdose by facilitating continued access to MAT for individuals who are on prescribed FDA-approved MAT and by facilitating initiation of MAT prior to release for individuals with OUDs who were not receiving MAT prior to arrest - taking into account individual preferences, clinician judgment^{ix} and medication diversion potential; and

WHEREAS, by partnering with community MAT providers including opioid treatment programs and substance abuse and counseling programs, jails can facilitate treatment continuity on jail entry and release with these providers.

WHEREAS, including MAT, when appropriate, as a tool in the range of jail-based treatment options, may stem the cycle of arrest, contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure facility for inmates and staff, and comprehensive drug treatment programs in jails are associated with reduced system costs^x; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) supports the use of FDA-approved and evidence-based Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder within the confines of a jail or other secure facility and, when deemed appropriate, as an alternative to incarceration for drug-related offenses.

ⁱ U.S. Dept. of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service. (July 2016). *State and Local Expenditures on Corrections and Education*. Available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/other/expenditures-corrections-education/brief.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (2010). *Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume 1. Summary of National Findings*. Rockville, MD; HHS Publication 10-4586.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (2011) *Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS): 1999-2009*. National Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Services, DASIS Series: S-56, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 11-4646, Rockville, MD.

^{iv} See Wolters Kluwer. (Sept. 14, 2016). *Costs of US Prescription Opioid Epidemic Estimated at \$78.5 Billion* (citing: Florence, C., Zhou, C. et al. (Oct. 2016). The Economic Burden of Prescription Opioid Overdose, Abuse, and Dependence in the United States, 2013. *Medical Care*, 54 (10), 901-906.) Available at: <http://wolterskluwer.com/company/newsroom/news/2016/09/costs-of-us-prescription-opioid-epidemic-estimated-at-usd78.5-billion.html>.

^v National League of Cities and National Association of Counties. (2016). *A Prescription for Action: Local Leadership in Ending the Opioid Epidemic*. Available at: <http://opioidaction.org/report/>.

^{vi} Jail Based Medication Assisted Treatment Promising Practices, Guidelines and Resources for the Field (2018). P. 5 Available at <https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/Jail-Based-MAT-PPG.pdf>.

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^{ix} Jail Based Medication Assisted Treatment Promising Practices, Guidelines and Resources for the Field (2018). P. 6 Available at <https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/Jail-Based-MAT-PPG.pdf>.

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