



# American Society of Addiction Medicine

## *Advancing Access to Opioid Addiction Stabilizing Medications*

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### **1. CHRONIC BRAIN DISEASE:**

- a. Opioid addiction is a chronic, relapsing brain disease
- b. 22.2 million Americans currently live with addiction
  - i. Nearly 2 million misuse prescription pain medications
- c. Opioid overdose is a national public health epidemic
  - i. 100 deaths every day, now exceed car accidents
  - ii. Drug overdose deaths have tripled since 1990

### **2. PART OF MAINSTREAM MEDICINE:**

- a. Treat patients with chronic disease management protocols
- b. Follows care pattern of lifelong diseases ...
  - i. Diabetes
  - ii. Hypertension
  - iii. End-Stage Renal Disease
  - iv. Asthma
- c. Physician disciplines most engaged with this disease
  - i. Addiction Medicine specialists
  - ii. Primary Care physicians (family medicine, internal medicine, OB/Gyn, Pediatrics)
  - iii. Psychiatric physicians

### **3. FDA-APPROVED STABILIZING MEDICATIONS:**

- a. Three FDA-approved medications work:
  - i. Buprenorphine, Methadone, Naltrexone
  - ii. Increases patient adherence, curbs relapse, reduces drug use
- b. Stabilizing medications are an essential part of treatment plan
  - i. Incorporated in bio-psycho-social care plan

### **4. NEED GREATER ACCESS:**

- a. FDA-approved stabilizing medications SAVE MONEY & SAVE LIVES
  - i. \$1 in treatment saves \$7 in societal costs
  - ii. Returns patients to productive and healthy lives
- b. Payers' barriers to access:
  - i. Onerous pre-authorization requirements
  - ii. Arbitrary dosage limitations
  - iii. Length of treatment restrictions
- c. Go to [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org) for more information

**Additional Sources:** [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov); [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)