



ASAM

The Voice of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Addiction Medicine

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ASAM Lauds CDC, CMS, NIDA, SAMHSA Support of Opioid Addiction Pharmacotherapies

CHEVY CHASE, MD, APRIL 24, 2014 – The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) lauds the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations for highlighting the important role opioid addiction pharmacotherapies play in treating opioid addiction and in addressing the nation’s prescription drug epidemic.

In a New England Journal of Medicine article, published April 23, 2014, “[Medication-Assisted Therapies—Tackling the Opioid Overdose Epidemic](#),” the Health and Human Services agencies show the impact FDA-approved medications have on treating the chronic brain disease of opioid addiction and on reducing the morbidity and death associated with prescription pain medicine misuse.

Furthermore, the agencies address some of the key barriers patients have in accessing these life-saving, stabilizing medications, including public and private payer utilization management policies that limit the dosage or duration of the prescription or that require a patient “fail first” at less intensive levels of care before authorizing the prescription. These and other payer limitations, as well as a review of the clinical and cost-effectiveness of these pharmacotherapies, are explained in [a report published by ASAM in June 2013](#).

“Addiction is a chronic brain disease that, like most other chronic diseases, requires a broad complement of treatment options”, offers Dr. Stuart Gitlow, ASAM’s President. “Medication, counseling, spiritual and physical rehabilitation are all critical components of treatment and physicians and patients should have unfettered access to any and all of these options in order to save lives.”

ASAM is developing the first ever clinical guideline for the use of all opioid addiction pharmacotherapies to be published spring 2015. ASAM also continues its outreach to and collaboration with primary care, pain and other medical specialties to educate clinicians about primary palliative care options, proper prescribing and identifying and treating addiction in all healthcare settings.

About The American Society of Addiction Medicine

The [American Society of Addiction Medicine](#) is a national medical specialty society of over 3,100 physicians and associated health professionals. Its mission is to increase access to and improve the quality of addiction treatment, to educate physicians, and other health care

providers and the public, to support research and prevention, to promote the appropriate role of the physician in the care of patients with addictive disorders, and to establish Addiction Medicine as a specialty recognized by professional organizations, governments, physicians, purchasers and consumers of health care services and the general public. ASAM was founded in 1954, and has had a seat in the American Medical Association House of Delegates since 1988.

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