



ASAM

The Voice of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Addiction Medicine

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Secretary of Health and Human Services Announces Planned Changes to Buprenorphine Prescribing Regulations

CHEVY CHASE, MD, SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 – Today, Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia M. Burwell announced her agency will move to expand access to addiction treatment by revising the regulations that govern how physicians can treat opioid addiction with approved narcotic medications such as buprenorphine.

“Today’s announcement is an exciting prospect for patients and their loved ones who too often struggle to access medical treatment for the devastating disease of addiction. This is a chronic illness that doesn’t go away after a ‘bad month,’” said Dr. Jeffrey Goldsmith, President of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM). “ASAM applauds the Administration for taking this step to expand access to evidence-based addiction treatment and close the gap between those who need treatment and those who receive it.”

Under current regulations, qualified physicians may treat up to 30 patients with buprenorphine, and after one year may apply to treat up to 100 patients. These requirements have limited some physicians from providing care to patients with opioid addiction, and exacerbate what is already a short supply of physicians willing to treat patients with this disease.

ASAM looks forward to working with HHS to inform the revisions to the regulations. Next week, ASAM will formally release a National Practice Guideline for the Use of Medications in the Treatment of Addiction Involving Opioid Use, which details best practices for treating opioid addiction with all of the

available medications, including the use of buprenorphine. “ASAM’s new practice guideline will serve as a strong evidence base for what high-quality opioid addiction treatment with buprenorphine should look like,” said Dr. Goldsmith. “If incorporated into the new regulations, these recommendations can help ensure that we expand access safely, and that patients receive good care.”

For more information about the American Society of Addiction Medicine please visit www.asam.org/.

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The [American Society of Addiction Medicine](http://www.asam.org/) is a national medical specialty society of more than 3,600 physicians and associated 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. Follow ASAM on Twitter [@ASAMorg](https://twitter.com/ASAMorg).