



New Jersey Society of Addiction Medicine

A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine

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March 25, 2020

The Honorable Adam J. Taliaferro
Chair, Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee
State House
145 W State St
Trenton, NJ 08625-0068

Re: Support for A3692

Dear Chairman Taliaferro and members of the Assembly Committee on Law and Public Safety,

On behalf of the New Jersey Society of Addiction Medicine (NJSAM), the medical specialty society representing physicians and clinicians in New Jersey who specialize in the prevention and treatment of addiction, we would like to take this opportunity to provide our support for A3692, which would require that state and county jails provide treatment for substance use disorder (SUD) to incarcerated individuals. With the addiction and overdose crisis significantly impacting New Jersey, we applaud this legislation for seeking to improve the treatment of incarcerated individuals suffering from SUD.

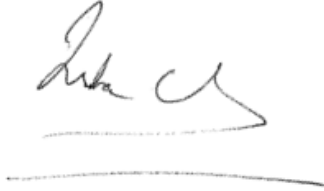
NJSAM is dedicated to increasing access to and improving the quality of addiction treatment for patients in New Jersey. To that end, we are committed to advocating for a state addiction treatment system that provides and expands access to all Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medications for addiction treatment (MAT). As addiction medicine specialists, we are wholeheartedly committed to evidence-based, compassionate care that improves the health and well-being of all patients with addiction. We applaud this legislation as it seeks to provide MAT, in combination with counseling, behavioral therapies, and withdrawal management services to incarcerated individuals.

MAT, when used as part of a comprehensive treatment approach, continues to accrue evidence for its effectiveness in engaging and retaining patients in treatment, reducing withdrawal and craving symptoms, reducing opioid misuse, and reducing many related health and social problems, particularly risk of infectious diseases. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) specifically notes that MAT has been shown to improve patient survival, increase retention in treatment, decrease illicit opiate use and other criminal activity among people with SUD, and increase patients' ability to gain and maintain employment.ⁱ Additionally, the positive impact of MAT for incarcerated individuals is substantial. MAT has been shown to reduce recidivism, illegal drug overdose deaths, and infectious disease transmission both inside jails and prisons, but also in the community.ⁱⁱ

NJSAM shares the state of New Jersey's goal of providing access to high-quality, evidence-based, addiction treatment services to our most vulnerable patients, and ensuring that those involved with the criminal justice system receive treatment. We offer our support for this bill and strongly recommend the committee favorably report it. Please do not hesitate to contact Dr.

Indra Cidambi at (908) 432-1929 or at iharibabuharibabu@yahoo.com, if NJSAM can be of any service to you. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Indra Cidambi', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Indra Cidambi, MD, FASAM
President, New Jersey Society of Addiction Medicine

CC:

The Honorable Annette Chaparro
The Honorable Linda Carter
The Honorable Nancy Pinkin
The Honorable Shavonda Sumter
The Honorable Lisa Swain
The Honorable Serena DiMaso
The Honorable Erik Peterson
The Honorable Jean Stanfield

ⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "Medication and Counseling Treatment." 12 February 2020. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, web, 17 February 2020.

ⁱⁱ Treatment Research Institute (TRI), Ed. "Cost & Utilization Outcomes of Opioid- Dependence Treatment." American Journal of Managed Care 2011. Available at https://www.ajmc.com/journals/supplement/2011/a369_june11/a369_11jun_alcohol_s235to48