



Facts on Governor Baker's 2017 "An Act Relative to Combatting Addiction, Accessing Treatment, Reducing Prescriptions, and Enhancing Prevention" (CARE Act)

- ❖ Upon assuming office in 2015, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker created The Massachusetts Opioid Addiction Working Group to address the ongoing opioid addiction epidemic that killed over 2,000 MA residents last year.
- ❖ Based on the recommendations of this working group, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted a **landmark piece of legislation initially proposed by Governor Baker called the STEP Act**. This legislation aimed to fight the opioid epidemic by better regulating **prescription drugs, expanding access to lifesaving Naloxone, and building the state's addiction treatment infrastructure**.
- ❖ In November 2017, Gov. Baker introduced CARE Act (also called opioid 2.0 bill) which would **further expand on these provisions of the STEP Act** to fight the addiction epidemic with these following provisions (this is not all inclusive):
- ❖ **Improving Access to Treatment:**
 - **Strengthen** the oversight authority of the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (DPH/BSAS) as licensing authorities over treatment facilities.
 - **Ensure** that DMH and DPH will conduct facility inspections consistent with their oversight authority and may enforce statutory and regulatory requirements
 - **Require** providers to treat residents with public health insurance (Masshealth) on a non-discriminatory basis.
- ❖ **Expand access to substance use treatment through the Emergency Department**
 - **Improve** Substance Use Evaluations in the Emergency Department.
 - **Ensure** that physicians attempt to engage the patient in voluntary treatment before pursuing involuntary treatment.
 - **Create** New pathways to inpatient substance use treatment, similar to the existing (Section 12) process used for mental health emergencies.
 - **Improve** the existing Civil Commitment for addiction treatment process under Section 35 by expanding the types of persons authorized to petition the court under section 35 to include medical professionals.
 - **Establishes** an advisory committee to establish and guidance for section 35
- ❖ **Promote mental health parity and improve access to evidence-based treatment methods for substance use disorder and related mental illness**
 - **Parity** laws currently require that insurers provide an equivalent level of treatment for mental health/addiction disorders as they do for physical disorders.
 - **Creates** a commission to review evidence-based treatment for substance use disorder, mental illness with co-occurring substance use disorder, and mental illness and to recommend the adoption of standards
- ❖ **Raise the profile of Recovery Coaches as important resources in the long-term management of substance use disorder; establishes a commission to review and make recommendations for credentialing standards for Recovery Coaches.**
- ❖ **Expand Access to Naloxone by removing the current requirement that each pharmacy obtain an individual authorization to dispense naloxone and by providing liability protection to practitioners and pharmacists.**
- ❖ **Prevent Prescription Opioid Misuse:**
 - **Require** Conversion to E-Prescribing for All Controlled Substance Prescriptions in the Commonwealth
 - **Develop** standards for DPH to apply in referring practitioners who overprescribe opioids to licensing boards for professional discipline
 - **Update** the Massachusetts Partial Fill Law to allow patients with a prescription for a schedule II controlled drug the option of initially obtaining less than the full amount of the prescribed drug while retaining the option to fill the remainder of the prescription at the same pharmacy within 30 days.
 - **Improve** prescribing practices for dental procedures by setting guidelines for appropriate prescriptions for common procedures such as tooth extraction.
 - **Add addictions expert** to the Board of Registration in Nursing
- ❖ **Expanding School-Based Programs for Education and Intervention**
 - **Create** a trust fund to be used to help finance the expansion of educational and intervention programs at public elementary, middle, and secondary schools and at public colleges and universities
- ❖ **Questions or Comments? Contact MOAR 617-423-6627 or email Jared@moar-Recovery.org**
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