

# Western MA Addiction Policy and COVID-19 Forum

## May 13, 2020 Action Items



Thank you to Western Massachusetts for Your Collaboration to address for supporting persons experiencing addiction and COVID 19 exposure. Look at what you put forward

- Recovery centers going live via internet formats to keep members engaged
- homelessness outreach with hotels, sanitation, Narcan, internet,
- BHN's specifically designed treatment for COVID 19 patients
- First responder, harm reduction and continuum of care providers for 24 hour support
- Access to testing improvement
- Telehealth access to keep involved in treatment
- MAT improved access to take home available

### We learned we need to build capacity to enhance

- Prevention, treatment, harm reduction, recovery support
- Equity for Communities of color
- Telehealth
- outreach and housing services for those experiencing homelessness
- Residential support
- Internet, cell phone, charging station capacity
- Medication assistance treatment/recovery take home continuance
- Fewer insurance authorizations for expedient service access

### Policy Action Items

- **With a \$5 to \$7billion downward economic impact;**  
**Request to our state legislators;**
  - Please do not cut prevention, treatment, recovery, harm reduction under MA Department of Public Health, Bureau of Addiction Services budget.
  - Please affirm need of peer recovery support centers, recovery coaches, as well as capacity for telehealth, maintenance of MAT take homes, those experiencing homelessness and disparity.
- Please ask our state legislators to support the MCAS, MA Coalition Addiction Services Budget Request

*Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services*

**MCAS REVISED FY 2021 Budget Request during COVID-19 Emergency  
for the DPH/Bureau of Substance Addiction Services Line-item 4512-0200**

The *Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services* (MCAS) is a group of advocacy organizations that have come together to speak with one voice to strengthen support for funding for addiction prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery support services and increased access to services for people with substance use disorders.

In light of the state's ongoing opioid epidemic and COVID-19 pandemic, MCAS respectfully requests that funding in the FY20 DPH/BSAS budget Line Item 4512-0200 for the following programs, be maintained in the FY21 budget.

- **Massachusetts Access to Recovery (MA-ATR)**. MCAS requests **an additional \$1.5M over House 2 to maintain the Massachusetts Access to Recovery (MA-ATR) program with state funding**. ATR offers comprehensive care coordination and access to services for individuals who are re-entering the community post-incarceration, pregnant women and veterans. In FY20, ATR is funded at \$3 million and only \$1.5 million in funding was included in House 2. Total funding of \$3 million must be included for ATR to avoid any service reductions.
- **BSAS Technical Assistance**. MCAS requests **an additional \$2M over House 2 to fund existing training and technical assistance programs offered to BSAS contracted treatment providers**. These much-needed trainings are essential to support providers and their staff in the field, and to stay abreast of the current clinical research and best practices in the field, including medication assisted treatment, medication management, and serving people with co-occurring mental health disorders.
- **Addiction Treatment Workforce Initiatives**. MCAS requests **\$1M to annualize the current addiction treatment workforce initiative being developed through an interagency service agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)**. The House 2 budget does not include funding for this initiative. Funding would allow the continuing the workforce development strategic planning, with a wide range of stakeholders, on how to identify educational pathways with local community colleges and universities, and increase individuals referred into this service. This will result in more individuals with lived experience working in the field of addiction.

MCAS also requests that the Legislature fund the remaining BSAS line items (**4512-0201, 4512-0202, 4512-0203, 4512-0204 and 4500-0206**) at the levels recommended in the Administration's House 2 proposal. These accounts comprise an essential component of the Commonwealth's safety net and provide critical prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support services.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Connie Peters on behalf of MCAS at [cpeters@abhmass.org](mailto:cpeters@abhmass.org).

**Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services**

*AIDs Action Committee, Dan Delaney, 617-251-6774*

*Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Lydia Conley and Connie Peters, 508-647-8385*

*End Hep C Massachusetts Coalition, Richard Baker, 617-927-0836 x 188*

*Learn to Cope, Joanne Peterson, 508-738-5148*

*Massachusetts Association of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselors, Joe Kelleher, 617-939-7354*

*Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Joe Finn, 617-367-6447*

*Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery, Maryanne Frangules, 617-423-6627*

*Massachusetts Public Health Association, Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director, 857-263-7072*

*Recovery Homes Collaborative, Bob Mills, 781-894-6110 ext. 1400*

*Student Coalition on Addiction (SCA), Kathleen Koenigs, [Kathleen\\_koenigs@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Kathleen_koenigs@hms.harvard.edu)*

*The Boston Public Health Commission, P.J. McCann at [PMccann@bphc.org](mailto:PMccann@bphc.org)*

### **Request to our legislators on Capitol Hill**

Please do not cut financial support for all addiction services inclusive of peer recovery support centers, as well as capacity for telehealth, maintenance of MAT take homes, those experiencing homelessness and disparity, such as communities of color

### **Passed in the House, The HEROES Act must pass in the Senate.**

Please ask Senators Warren and Markey to support it because it would provide

- **An additional \$100 billion** allocated for the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund
- **Funding for community mental health services** — Community-based mental health and addiction services are on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. Now, when anxiety is high and service agencies are under financial pressure, it is crucial that these programs remain available to those who need them. The HEROES Act includes a \$1 billion block grant for community mental health and addiction services to be administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- **Aid to state and local governments** — With state and local government budgets at the breaking point, the federal government must step in to ensure their solvency. The HEROES Act includes aid for state Medicaid programs, funding for testing and other initiatives that will help keep state and local governments functioning.

### **Who are Your Elected Legislators:**

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Beacon Hill and Capitol Hill legislators

### **Questions:**

Email – [Maryanne@moar-recovery.org](mailto:Maryanne@moar-recovery.org)