

An Act Providing Access To Full Spectrum of Addiction Treatment Services

Lead Sponsors: S.1150 Sen. Keenan; H.1732 Rep. Malia/Rep. Santiago

In a widely recognized opioid overdose epidemic, insurance coverage for addiction treatment needs to be improved for individuals seeking recovery from substance use disorders. Extending treatment up to 30 days based on medical necessity without formal insurance authorization will save lives. With more than 2,000 Massachusetts residents dying from opioid overdose each year, the case needs to be made for more time in treatment!

This bill would:

- Require all health insurance to cover up to **30 days of treatment when it is deemed medically necessary by the treating clinician.**
- **Improve access to stabilization and step-down treatment** at an estimated cost of only 5 cents more per insured member per month.¹
- Create an incentive for addiction treatment providers to **build capacity to make more services available**
- Enable people with private (employer provided) insurance to access the **same treatment that MassHealth members have.**

The Facts are Clear:

- Research shows that **longer lengths of stay in addiction treatment produces better outcomes.**
- Data compiled by DPH shows that individuals with **longer lengths of stay have a much higher probability of transitioning to the next level of care** and continuing their recovery journey.

How long does drug addiction treatment usually last?

Individuals progress through drug addiction treatment at various rates. Research demonstrates unequivocally that good outcomes are contingent on adequate treatment length. Generally, for residential or outpatient treatment, participation for less than 90 days is of limited effectiveness, and treatment lasting significantly longer is recommended for maintaining positive outcomes. For methadone maintenance, 12 months is considered the minimum, and some continue to benefit from methadone maintenance for many years.²

Remaining in treatment for an adequate period is critical. The appropriate duration for an individual depends on the type and degree of the patient's problems and needs. Research indicates that most individuals need at least 3 months in treatment to significantly reduce or stop their drug use and that the best outcomes occur with longer durations of treatment. Recovery from drug addiction is a long-term process and can require further treatment. As with other chronic illnesses, recovery interruptions can occur and signal a need for treatment to be reinstated or adjusted. Strategies to engage and keep patients in treatment are critical.

Endorsing Organizations

Association for Behavioral Healthcare,
CASA Esperanza,
Community Agencies Serving Alcoholics,
Foundation for Alcohol Education,
Learn to Cope,
MA Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors,
Massachusetts Association of Behavioral Health Systems,
Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery,
Office of Recovery Services - The City of Boston,
Recovery Centers of America,
Recovery Homes Collaborative,
The Gavin Foundation

Questions?

Email: maryanne@moar-recovery.org

¹ MANDATED BENEFIT REVIEW OF SENATE BILL 1502 SUBMITTED TO THE 189TH GENERAL COURT: AN ACT PROVIDING ACCESS TO FULL SPECTRUM ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES, March 2016, Center for Health Information Analysis

² <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/principles-effective-treatment>