



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
DIVISION OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION



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Re: Medication Assisted Treatment

To: West Virginia Board of Pharmacy

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is considered the gold standard of care for opioid use disorder (OUD). The FDA has approved three medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD): methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone.

Incarceration is a primary risk factor for overdose. The American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM) and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) fully endorse treatment with MOUD in all criminal justice settings.

ASAM states, "Individuals who are incarcerated are a vulnerable population and withholding evidence-based opioid use disorder treatment increases risk of death during detainment and upon release." In fact, **people leaving prison without MOUD are up to forty times higher risk of dying from overdose in the first two weeks** following their discharge than the general population.

Failure of the pharmaceutical community to provide the gold standard of care to criminal justice persons may increase health risk in the community. Therefore, it is vital that continuity of care from incarceration to reinstatement into the community is maintained.

Please be aware that, as the West Virginia Department of Corrections continues to implement MAT within the correctional facilities, local pharmacies could see an increase in requests for MOUD therapies in individuals released into the community. **Communication and coordination between correctional facilities and local pharmacies upon discharge of a patient on MOUD is essential to continue treatment during this transition and maintain continuity of care for the patient.**

We appreciate your assistance in caring for our population.

Very Respectfully,

Ayne Amjad, M.D.

Medical Director, Correctional Facilities