



COVID 19 Action Steps for a Better Tomorrow



June 14, 2020

Our Mission is to organize recovering individuals, families and friends into a collective voice to educate the public about the value of recovery from alcohol and other addictions.

Thank you for supporting persons experiencing addiction and COVID 19 exposure.

We see how the following have helped

- Recovery centers going live via internet formats to keep members engaged
- Homelessness outreach with hotels, sanitation, Narcan, internet,
- 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 (please do not cut)
- outreach and housing services for those experiencing homelessness and active drug users
- Equity for Communities of color and disparity
- Telehealth capacity to connect
- Internet, cell phone, charging station capacity
- Residential support
- Medication assistance treatment/recovery take home continuance
- Fewer insurance authorizations for expedient service access
- Supportive structure for the unemployed and those returning to work
- Salary Incentive and Professional Development for Employees

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 support the MCAS, MA Coalition Addiction Services Budget Request - See below

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 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. 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 help to build addiction service capacity

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. Questions on MCAS proposal? Please feel free to contact Connie Peters on behalf of MCAS at cpeters@abhmass.org.

Thank you,

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