

Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services

~ Saving Lives, Saving Dollars ~

MCAS FY 2020 Budget Request for the DPH/Bureau of Substance Addiction Services

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, treatment and recovery support services and increased access to services for people with substance use disorders.

The Coalition is extremely grateful for our state policymakers' commitment and leadership in addressing the opioid epidemic, and we congratulate you on your many successful efforts to date including the reduction in the number of overdose deaths in our state. Although addiction to substances extends well beyond the use of opioids and many who have an opioid addiction are poly-substance users with co-occurring mental health disorders, opioids are indeed the drugs that continue to devastate our families, communities and state and local government agencies as well.

In light of our state's ongoing epidemic, MCAS is requesting the following in the FY 2020 state budget for the DPH/Bureau of Substance Addiction Services:

Increase Line Item 4512-0200 by \$45.5 million for the following programs and services:

- **\$10 Million to support BSAS' provision of training and technical assistance to DOCs and HOCs** around implementation of Chapter 208 of the Acts of 2018, which mandates the availability of medication assisted treatment and counseling services to individuals pre-adjudication, while incarcerated, and post release. The majority of the inmates in Massachusetts jails and prisons have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder, a mental health condition or both. Furthermore, people with a history of incarceration are 120 times more likely to die of an overdose.
- **\$20 Million to expand Family Sober Living Programs.** These programs are designed to address the complex issues involved in family substance use treatment and recovery, to support active housing and employment searches, and to assist families with children in meeting their personal goals and objectives. Family Sober Living Programs stabilize families by providing a safe haven; a holistic approach to recovery that will address the inter-relationships between their physical, psychological health as well as parenting responsibilities; and other supportive services designed to further develop skill levels appropriate for independent living.
- **\$5 Million for SUD Workforce Development.** In addition to SUD providers struggling to compete for staff in the current healthcare marketplace, many additional demands are placed on staff for which training is needed, such as education on how to serve people with co-occurring disorders, the provision of medication assisted treatment, and patient medication management. In addition, programs at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission traditionally offered a pathway for people in recovery to become addiction treatment professionals, but have lost federal funding. Funding to serve this population of people in recovery through the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission could be transferred through an interagency service agreement with BSAS.

- **\$7 Million to preserve and expand access to the Massachusetts Access to Recovery (MA-ATR)** program; reduce waitlist times; and conduct post-ATR services research to identify long-term recovery outcomes. MA-ATR was funded by a SAMHSA grant to address the opioid epidemic but funding is slated to end by March 2020 unless Congress appropriates another year of funding. MCAS requests that the state give serious consideration to appropriating state dollars to support the continuation and expansion of this highly successful program.
- **\$3.5 million to cover start-up and costs to procure five additional Recovery Centers in “hot spot” cities/towns across the state.** Peer-led, peer-driven services and activities are at the core of these centers - allowing participants to learn new skills, mentor others, and value their lived-experience. Recovery Centers provide individuals, their family members and loved ones a safe, clean and sober place to connect with their peers to conduct job searches, hang-out, and obtain support for sustained recovery. The Recovery Centers are intended to not only build a peer community that is supportive of people in recovery, but are also designed to reduce the stigma associated with addiction by putting a “positive face of recovery” within communities.

If you would like to discuss these requests further or if you have questions, please contact Connie Peters on behalf of MCAS at 508-647-8385, extension 13 or cpeters@abhmass.org.

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

Massachusetts Public Health Association, Jodi Silverman, Interim Executive Director, 857-263-7072

Massachusetts Viral Hepatitis Coalition, www.aac.org/policy-center/coalitions/mvhc.html

Recovery Homes Collaborative, Bob Mills and John McGahan, www.rhcmass.org

Student Coalition on Addiction (SCA), Siva Sundaram, siva_sundaram@hms.harvard.edu

The Boston Public Health Commission, Catherine Donovan, 617-534-2288