



MDDCSAM is the Maryland state chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine whose members are physicians and other health providers who treat people with substance use disorders.

HB 794 Public Health – Opioid Restitution Fund Advisory Council
House Appropriations Committee and the House Health & Government Operations Committee

SUPPORT

March 1, 2022

U.S. drug overdoses are the highest they have ever been, and increasing faster than ever before (an approximate 30% rise over in one year, with the great majority due to opioids).

Significant new restitution funds are an opportunity to address this crisis effectively.

However, the best use of these funds is not necessarily clear cut.

It is possible to get spending priorities wrong, a unique opportunity, missing this opportunity.

Therefore, the ‘Hopkins Principles’ were developed as a process for determining the wise use of opioid restitution funds by a group of over fifty prominent organizations: <https://opioidprinciples.jhsph.edu/> as follows:

1. Spend money to save lives.
2. Use evidence to guide spending.
3. Invest in youth prevention.
4. Focus on racial equity.
- 5. Develop a transparent, inclusive decision-making process.**

These organizations include the American Society of Addiction Medicine, American Public Health Association, American Medical Association, Faces & Voices of Recovery, Legal Action Center, the Kennedy Forum, American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, National Council on Behavioral Health, PEW Charitable Trusts, Shatterproof, the Drug Policy Alliance, and many more).

Our understanding of addiction treatment and recovery is evolving, with expanded appreciation for the importance of recovery supports, peer support, and various forms of prevention.

Particularly in the case of the treatment of opioid use disorder, we have an opportunity to make great strides in **breaking down the profound (and unnecessary) treatment barriers due to stigma and misunderstanding regarding medication treatment.**

Respectfully,
Joseph A. Adams, MD, FASAM, Chair, Public Policy Committee