



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 971. Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Substance Abuse Treatment - Network Adequacy
House Health & Government Operations Committee. February 24, 2022

FAVORABLE

Alcohol and drug use and addiction are among the leading causes of death and disability in the United States (1) Treatment for Substance use disorders has been designated as an “Essential Health Benefit” in the 2010 Affordable Care Act.

It is well known that treatment services for substance use treatment services are particularly lacking for young people.

Over 20 million Americans struggle with addiction, but **often do not get the treatment they need**, for reasons related to stigma, misunderstanding and inadequate insurance coverage. (2)

The 2008 Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) legislated parity between benefits for the treatment of addiction and mental health disorders and benefits for the treatment of other medical conditions. **However, the promises of parity have not been realized.** (3)

According to the CDC, there were over 100,000 fatal overdoses in the U.S. during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, from April 2020 to April 2021.

This is the **highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded** in the U.S. in a single year. This represents **a nearly 30% one-year increase, the fastest increase on record.** (4)

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Thank you,
Joseph A. Adams MD, FASAM, Chair, Public Policy Committee

REFERENCES:

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2. www.shatterproof.org/learn/addiction-basics/addiction-in-america
3. Melek SP, et al. Addiction and mental health vs. physical health: Widening disparities in network use and provider reimbursement. Milliman Research Report. November 19, 2019. <http://www.milliman.com/bowman>
4. www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm. National Center for Vital Statistics.