

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors

Public Policy Update

June 5, 2013

Highlights

- **2014-2015 SAPT Block Grant Uniform Application Receives OMB Approval**
- **SAMHSA Releases Sequestration Operating Plan for FY 2013- [Operating Plan](#)**
- **NASADAD Signs onto Letter Opposing Use of Prevention and Public Health Fund to Implement ACA Exchanges- [Sign-on Letter](#)**
- **SAMHSA Announces New PDMP Grant Program – [Funding Opportunity Announcement](#)**

Legislative News

2014-2015 SAPT Block Grant Uniform Application Receives OMB Approval

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has said it received approval from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the 2014-2015 Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant Uniform Application. NASADAD will host SAMHSA staff on the next public policy call – Monday, June 10 at 4pm EST to discuss the new application and what has been sent to States. NASADAD has been concerned about changes to the application and proposals from the Administration to require new set-asides in the application.

SAMHSA Releases Sequestration Operating Plan for FY 2013

On Tuesday, May 14th, SAMHSA released its sequestration operating plan for FY 2013. FY 2013 operating levels for NASADAD priority programs include:

- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant- \$1,710 million compared to \$1,800 million in FY 2012 (\$90 million decrease)
- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)- \$176 million compared to \$186 million in FY 2012 (\$10 million decrease)
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)- \$404 million compared to \$429 million in FY 2012 (\$25 million decrease)

SAMHSA has not released the specific allocations for the SAPT Block Grant with sequestration reductions, but as soon as the document is released we will send it to the membership.

[SAMHSA Sequestration Operating Plan for FY 2013](#) is attached.

NASADAD Signs onto Letter Opposing Use of Prevention and Public Health Fund to Implement ACA Exchanges

NASADAD signed onto a letter sent to the President on Friday, May 3rd by the Trust for America's Health with over 122 signatures from national and State public health organizations. The letter expressed opposition to the use of Prevention and Public Health Fund money to implement the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health exchanges. It also discusses the impact of sequestration and net diversion of resources to programs supported by the Prevention Fund, which amounts to a 38 percent cut. The programs supported by the Prevention Fund are already

facing gaping holes due to current diminished funding levels, including substance abuse and mental health. The letter requests that the Administration restore Prevention Fund allocations to their original intent for FY 2014.

For the full letter, see [Trust for America's Health Letter to the President](#)

House Judiciary Committee Establishes Over-Criminalization Task Force

On Tuesday, May 7th, the House Judiciary Committee adopted a resolution to establish the Bipartisan "House Committee on the Judiciary Over-Criminalization Task Force". The resolution, announced by Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee Bob Goodlatte (R- VA 6th), is established in response to the growing number of federal criminal codes and how they relate to mens rea, the idea that a person needs to have criminal intent in order to be charged criminally. Goodlatte remarked that the task force will conduct hearings, investigations, and report on federal laws that are currently in the federal criminal code, as well as make recommendations for improvements. The taskforce will be led by the House Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Judiciary Subcommittee Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI 5th) and the Subcommittee's Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA 3rd). Other members include: Spencer Bachus (R-AL 6th), Louie Gohmert (R-TX 1st), Raul Labrador (R-ID 1st), George Holding (R-NC 13th), Jerrold Nadler (D-NY 10th), Steve Cohen (D-TN 9th), Karen Bass (D-CA 37th), and Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY 8th).

Scott reported that Congress makes 50 new criminal laws each year. Sensenbrenner stated that there are currently 4,500 criminal laws, many of which require prison time. He expressed his desire to identify possible federal criminal code improvements and common sense solutions for over-criminalization and prison crowding. According to the resolution, the task force is set to take effect on May 31, 2013 and will expire on November 30, 2013.

For the resolution adopted by the House Judiciary Committee, see [Over-Criminalization Task Force Resolution of 2013](#)

News

White House Hosts National Conference on Mental Health

On Monday, June 3rd the White House held a National Conference on Mental Health as part of the Administration's effort to open a national dialogue on mental health, which was included as part of the recommendations from the Vice President's Taskforce to Prevent Gun Violence in January. The conference included remarks by the President and Vice President, followed by panels led by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) Eric Shinseki. The panels focused on raising awareness and reducing stigma around mental illness, highlighting successful outreach techniques and how to more actively engage a wider audience, and expanding access to care to mental health services with a panel that specifically discussed access for veterans.

For more information, see [White House Background on the National Conference on Mental Health](#)

For full video of the conference, see [National Conference on Mental Health](#)

Smart Approaches to Marijuana Hosts Briefing on Marijuana Prevention

On Friday, April 26th NASADAD Executive Director Rob Morrison, Public Policy Director Michelle Dirst, and Public Policy Associate Andrew Whitacre attended a briefing hosted by Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM) on the implications of marijuana use. Project SAM is chaired by former Congressman Patrick Kennedy and is an alliance of organizations and individuals promoting a public health approach to marijuana policy. Dr. Kevin Sabet, Director of SAM, stated the organization's approach as informed by science and field experience. Former Rep. Kennedy discussed how National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) research on the impact of marijuana use on the brain impacted his position on the issue.

Dr. Christian Thurstone, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Colorado-Denver and medical director at one of Colorado's largest youth substance abuse treatment clinics, discussed the impact he has seen in treatment admissions, school expulsions, and emergency rooms visits amongst youth in Colorado since the commercialization of marijuana began in 2008. Carmen Fernandez, Director of one of the largest substance abuse treatment providers in Mexico, discussed the negative consequences that marijuana legalization in the United States would create in Mexico. She presented former Rep. Kennedy with 40,000 signatures from her country in opposition to legalization of marijuana in the United States.

For more information, see [SAM website](#)

SAMHSA Announces New PDMP Grant Program (*Taken from SAMHSA Notice*)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announced a new Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) grant program for States called the Electronic Health Records (EHR) and PDMP Integration Grant program. Eligible applicants are State government agencies (e.g., Single State Authority, Board of Pharmacy, Health Department, etc.) in the 49 states and one U.S. territory (Guam) that have **enacted** legislation or regulations that implement a State PDMP and impose appropriate penalties for unauthorized use and disclosure of information maintained in the program.

The Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is posted at <http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/2013/ti-13-013.aspx> and the deadline for applications is June 12, 2013. Applications may be submitted online at <http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=l3GMRJlbCCQsvmY8lfgkz7bXKJfNkc66HxmNy3G15LwX7vyYhMhg!780405525?oppId=233533&mode=VIEW>.