

# The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors

## Public Policy Update

### June 14, 2013

#### Highlights

- **NASADAD Releases Sign-On Letter in Support of SAPT Block Grant-** *Sign-on letter is attached*
- **NASADAD Presents at Briefing on Substance Use Disorders in Child Welfare-** *NASADAD PowerPoint is attached*
- **NASADAD Presents at Congressional Briefing on Addiction-** *NASADAD PowerPoint is attached*
- **House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Prescription Drug Abuse-** [Energy and Commerce Committee Webpage](#)

#### Legislative News

##### **NASADAD Releases Sign-On Letter in Support of SAPT Block Grant**

NASADAD has released a sign-on letter in support of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant. The letter discusses the important role the SAPT Block Grant plays in funding prevention, treatment, and recovery programs in every State. On average, the SAPT Block Grant makes up 42 percent of spending on substance abuse treatment and 64 percent on substance abuse prevention activities in the States. The deadline for organizations to sign onto the letter is Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. As of June 14<sup>th</sup>, 113 national and State organizations have signed onto the letter.

The SAPT Block Grant sign-on letter is attached

#### News

##### **NASADAD Presents at Congressional Briefing on Addiction**

On Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Addiction, Treatment, and Recovery (ATR) Caucus held a briefing on the substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery. The briefing began with Congressman Tim Ryan (D – OH 13<sup>th</sup>), Congressman John Fleming (R – LA 4<sup>th</sup>), and Paul Tonko (D- NY 20<sup>th</sup>) co-chairs of the ATR caucus, speaking about the importance of awareness concerning the over 20 million Americans who do not receive adequate treatment for substance use disorders. Representative Fleming spoke at length about the vital role prevention plays in controlling substance abuse, highlighting the issue of adolescent illicit drug use. Young people, whose brains have not fully developed, are at a much higher risk of addiction than adults whose brains are fully developed. He also raised a concern about marijuana and its addictive qualities. Congressman Tonko also spoke briefly about substance use disorder problems, as well as the stigma associated with addiction.

A panel of guest speakers followed the Congressmen, beginning with NASADAD Executive Director Rob Morrison. Morrison discussed the importance of prevention, treatment, and recovery services, which through research and practice have demonstrated their effectiveness by saving lives, as well as taxpayer dollars. He also discussed the financing of such services, like

the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant (administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration or SAMHSA) and emphasized the importance of providing clinically appropriate care, which includes offering medication as part of a menu of services. Phoenix House in the Mid-Atlantic's Clinical Director George Knoerlein was the final speaker. He spoke about the importance of treatment centers, as well as various programs that Phoenix House employs, such as treatment within prisons to give inmates a better chance at life after prison. He also provided examples of effective treatments and personal success stories from Phoenix House.

For more information about the SAMHSA SAPT Block Grant: [Click here](#)

NASADAD PowerPoint is attached

### **NASADAD Presents at Briefing on Substance Use Disorders in Child Welfare**

On Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, NASADAD Executive Director Rob Morrison presented as part of a panel at a briefing hosted by Children and Family Futures (CFF) on "Substance Use Disorders in Child Welfare: What Works for Children and Families." The briefing consisted of three panels, which covered substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery services for children and families, personal stories of parents in recovery from addiction, and improving outcomes for children, adolescents, and their families. Rob presented in the prevention, treatment, and recovery panel. He focused his remarks on the substance abuse treatment gap, the substance abuse services investment gap, the intersection between the public treatment system, the criminal justice system, and the child welfare system, the work of State Substance Abuse Agencies and Women's Services Network (WSN), and the role of the SAPT Block Grant in supporting services for pregnant and parenting women.

Dr. Norma Finkelstein, Executive Director of the Institute for Health and Recovery (IHR) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, discussed the stigma and lack of attention paid to the substance abuse of parents. She emphasized the need to address and treat families as a whole unit, due to the family-wide impact of substance abuse. Her institute engages in parenting and home-based intensive treatment. Mary Kay Hudson, Director of Court Services with the Indiana Judicial Center, discussed their efforts to promote treatment retention in Family Treatment Courts by utilizing a multidisciplinary team approach. She mentioned that their Family Dependency Courts save on average between 5 and 13 thousand dollars per family. Dr. Ira Chasnoff, Pediatrician and President of the Children's Research Triangle in Chicago, stated that 34 percent of participants in one of their studies were using substances that could change the structure and function of fetal brain development. He also highlighted the fact that the number of placements in the child welfare system is a higher predictor of substance abuse problems than previous exposure to substances. Judge Karen Adam, Division 13 of the Arizona Superior Court in Pima County (Tucson, Arizona) stated that 70 percent of child dependency court cases in the county involve substance abuse.

NASADAD's PowerPoint is attached

### **House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Prescription Drug Abuse**

On Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, NASADAD's Public Policy Associate Andrew Whitacre and Public Policy Intern Amber Jabeen attended a briefing held by the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee. It was the first in a series of hearings on prescription drug abuse. The hearing focused on the federal government's response to prescription drug abuse, included on the panel were Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Gil Kerlikowske; Deputy Director of Regulatory Programs at the Center for Drugs Evaluation and Research (CDER) at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Dr. Doug Throckmorton; and Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) at SAMHSA Dr. H. Westley Clark.

Director Kerlikowske emphasized that collaborating with other federal agencies in combating prescription drug abuse is a primary focus of his office. He highlighted ONDCP's efforts on education, proper disposal of prescription medication, advocating treatment for substance use disorders, and improving enforcement in drug interdiction efforts, limiting doctor shopping, and eliminating pill mills. ONDCP released a focused strategy on prescription drug abuse, [ONDCP Prescription Drug Plan](#).

Dr. Throckmorton discussed FDA's science-based approach to address the prescription drug epidemic. They are engaged in improving the safe use of opioid pain medication by developing abuse deterrent formulas. They have also developed patient and prescriber education materials, including their Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) training program for prescription drug manufacturers. FDA is also in the process of considering alternative methods of using Naloxone to prevent opioid overdose deaths. Dr. Clark discussed SAMHSA's efforts to expand access to substance abuse treatment. He mentioned their participation in the HHS Behavioral Health Coordinating Committee's Prescription Drug Abuse Subcommittee. SAMHSA has also developed patient and prescriber educational materials on prescription drug abuse and they have supported early intervention efforts, such as integrating the Screening, Briefing Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program into primary care settings.

For more information on the hearing, see the [Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee webpage](#)

*Should you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact Michelle Dirst, Director of Public Policy, at [mdirst@nasadad.org](mailto:mdirst@nasadad.org) or Andrew Whitacre, Public Policy Associate, at [awhitacre@nasadad.org](mailto:awhitacre@nasadad.org)*