

May 6, 2021



D.C. Update: President Biden nominates NASADAD Member Dr. Delphin-Rittmon to lead SAMHSA, NASADAD sends letter to Congress in support of the DFC Pandemic Relief Act, and more

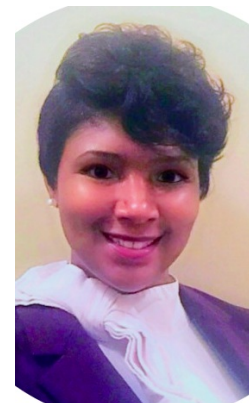


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Meet the Member

Dr. LaTarsha Michael, Prevention Coordinator for State of Mississippi

Dr. LaTarsha Michael currently serves as the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant Prevention Project Coordinator at the Mississippi State Department of Mental Health. During her tenure with the department, Dr. Michael has served as project coordinator for the Mississippi Prevention Alliance for Communities and Colleges (MPACC), which was instrumental in the rebirth of the Mississippians Advocating Against Unhealthy Decisions (MAAUD) Coalition- a statewide coalition striving to reduce destructive behaviors through community action, public policy, education, and advocacy. Dr. Michael also served as a member of the Planning and Submission Committee responsible for securing the State Opioid Response Grant (SOR) and Emergency Grants to Address Mental and Substance Use Disorders During COVID-19, administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Currently serving as the Southeast Regional Representative for NASADAD's National Prevention Network (NPN) and an active member of the Mississippi Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Advisory Council, Dr. Michael is looking forward to making great strides in combating alcohol and drug misuse.



NASADAD sends letter to Congress in support of the DFC Pandemic Relief Act

Last week, NASADAD sent a [letter](#) to Congressmen David Joyce (R-OH) and Derek Kilmer (D-WA), sponsors of the [Drug-Free Communities \(DFC\) Pandemic Relief Act](#) (H.R. 654). The Association expressed our support for the bill, which would offer relief to DFC grantees who are unable to meet federal matching requirements due to the pandemic. As described in the letter, due to stay-at-home orders that impacted volunteer involvement; school and community closures; and reduced contributions from local businesses, many coalitions across the country were not able to meet the match requirement. In addition, the bill would benefit DFC grantees that ended their grants during fiscal year (FY) 2020. That cohort of grantees, under H.R. 654, would not be held liable for having to pay back already expended funds that they were not able to match.

Around the Agencies

President Biden nominates Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, NASADAD Member from CT, to serve as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use

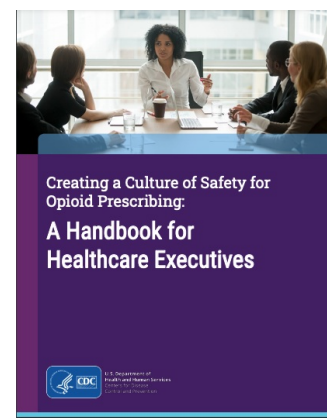


The Biden-Harris Administration recently [nominated](#) Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon to lead the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Dr. Delphin-Rittmon is the NASADAD Member from Connecticut, serving as the Commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and managing the State's publicly funded substance use and mental health service delivery system.

Prior to serving as Commissioner, she served as DMHAS's Deputy Commissioner, Senior Policy Advisor, and the Director of the Department's Office of Multicultural Healthcare Equity. In 2014, Dr. Delphin-Rittmon completed a two-year White House appointment working as a Senior Advisor to the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). As a NASADAD Member, Dr. Delphin-Rittmon has served on the Association's Public Policy Committee, has presented at NASADAD's Annual Meeting on numerous occasions, and hosted NASADAD staff for a series of site visits to local publicly funded substance use disorder (SUD) providers. In recognition of her dedication to effective and equitable SUD services, she received the NASADAD State Service Award in 2019.

CDC releases new resources on opioid prescribing for healthcare executives

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released two new resources to support healthcare executives as they work to improve safety related to opioid prescribing. The first publication, [Creating a Culture of Safety for Opioid Prescribing: A Handbook for Healthcare Executives](#), contains information from healthcare executives and quality improvement leaders in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The handbook includes insights on the value of evidence-based opioid prescribing, the collection and use of data, engagement with external stakeholders, establishing policies and standards to support safer opioid prescribing practices, training, and education of providers, and supporting the continuum of care. The second resource, [Quality Improvement and Care Coordination When Prescribing](#)



[Opioids for Chronic Pain](#), is a video series that includes stories from healthcare leaders about the application of quality improvement measures to improve opioid prescribing practices.

FDA approves higher dosage of naloxone

The Food and Drug Administration recently [announced](#) the approval of a higher dose of naloxone nasal spray to treat opioid overdose. The FDA previously approved 2 mg and 4 mg naloxone products and has now approved the delivery of 8 mg of naloxone. As described in the press release, the approval of 8 mg naloxone is another step the agency has taken to improve the availability of naloxone products. The agency has also encouraged manufacturers to pursue approval of over-the-counter naloxone products; required drug manufacturers for all opioid pain relievers and medicines to treat opioid use disorder (OUD) to add new recommendations about naloxone to prescribing information; and has extended the shelf life of naloxone from 24 months to 36 months.



SAMHSA to hold webinar on trauma-informed practices in the courtroom

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) GAINS Center announced an upcoming webinar titled "Fostering Trauma-Informed Practices in Your

Courtroom: Approaches for Judges, Court Staff, and Providers." The webinar will discuss the importance of adopting a trauma-informed approach in drug treatment courts and will provide practical information on implementing trauma-informed practices. The webinar will be held on May 26th from 2:30pm-4:00pm ET and registration can be found [here](#).

Research Roundup

Study examines barriers to buprenorphine access in pharmacies

A [study](#) recently published in *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* examined barriers encountered by patients seeking to fill buprenorphine prescriptions from pharmacies in counties with high opioid-related mortality rates. Researchers conducted a telephone audit and analyzed availability across pharmacy type and county characteristics. Results of the study indicated that 73% of pharmacies contacted reported being able to dispense buprenorphine and 20% reported they would not distribute the medication. In addition, independent pharmacies and pharmacies in southern States were significantly more likely to restrict buprenorphine.
