

February 11, 2021



D.C. Update: House E&C Committee releases draft of COVID-19 relief bill, upcoming Children of Addiction Awareness Week, and more



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Meet the Member

James Cremer, Treatment Coordinator from State of Massachusetts

James Cremer currently serves as the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) within the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Approaching 30 years working for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in mental health and public health roles, James has contributed to the planning/development and implementation of a broad range of mental health and substance use disorder services in areas including housing and homelessness, criminal justice re-entry and diversionary services, adolescents and young adult services, and co-occurring SUD/MH services. James holds a Masters of Social Work degree from Boston College and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



Capitol Hill Happenings

House E&C Committee releases draft of COVID-19 relief bill

On February 9th, the House Energy and Commerce Committee released a [draft](#) bill of public health provisions being considered as part of a COVID-19 relief package. The bill contains several provisions related to substance use and mental health, including:

- \$1.75 billion in supplemental funding for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA)
- \$1.75 billion in supplemental funding for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant within SAMHSA
- \$80 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for grants to "...plan, develop, operate, or participate in health professions and nursing training activities for health care students, residents, professionals, paraprofessionals, trainees, and public safety officers, and employers of such individuals, in evidence-informed strategies for reducing and addressing suicide, burnout, and mental and behavioral health conditions (including substance use disorders) among health care professionals."
- \$20 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to "carry out a national evidence-based education and awareness campaign directed at health care professionals and first responders... to encourage primary prevention of mental and behavioral health conditions and secondary and tertiary prevention by encouraging health care professionals to seek support and treatment for their own behavioral health concerns"
- \$40 million to HRSA to provide grants to "entities providing health care" in order to "...establish, enhance, or expand evidence informed programs or protocols to promote mental and behavioral health among their providers, other personnel, and members."
- \$30 million to SAMHSA for grants to "support community-based overdose prevention programs, syringe services programs, and other harm reduction services, with respect to harms of drug misuse that are exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency."
- \$50 million to SAMHSA for grants to address "increased community behavioral health needs worsened by the COVID-19 public health emergency."
- \$30 million for Project AWARE
- \$20 million for Youth Suicide Prevention
- \$10 million for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network

The Committee, led by Chairman Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), is marking up the bill today.

[Senators send letter to NIDA regarding medications for stimulant use disorders](#)

Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) recently sent a [letter](#), signed by 11 of their Senate colleagues, to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) regarding the research and development of medications for individuals struggling with methamphetamine use. As described in the [press release](#), the Senators mentioned the promising results of a recent NIDA study and asked for answers to several questions, including how much funding is currently being dedicated to research of potential medications, the progress of clinical trials, steps being taken to ensure diversity in clinical trials, and current approaches to treating stimulant use disorders. In addition to Senators Brown and Capito, the letter was signed by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Bob Casey (D-PA), Steve Daines (R-MT), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Jon Tester (D-MT).

[Around the Agencies](#)

[SAMHSA extends application period for EMS Training grants](#)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has extended the application due date for the fiscal year (FY) 2021 Rural Emergency Medical Services Training grants (EMS Training). The purpose of this program is to recruit and train emergency medical services (EMS) personnel in rural areas across the country. Eligible applicants include rural EMS agencies operated by a local or

tribal government and non-profit EMS agencies. SAMHSA plans to award a total of \$5,500,000 to 27 grantees over a one-year period. The updated due date is March 18th and more information can be found [here](#).

News from the States



OhioMHAS announces new online training certificate for professionals working with children and families affected by trauma

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), within the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS), [announced](#) a new online training certificate for social service professionals, public assistance professionals, and early childhood professionals who work with children and families that have experienced trauma. As described in the announcement, the three-tier certificate and curriculum will enable professionals to develop knowledge and skill in the trauma competencies adopted by the Family First Leadership Advisory Committee. Professionals can achieve proficiency in the following levels: Trauma Aware, Trauma Informed, and Trauma Competent. The NASADAD member for the State of Ohio is Lori Criss, Director of OhioMHAS, and Region V Director on the NASADAD Board of Directors.

In the News

Upcoming Children of Addiction Awareness Week

The National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA) announced their upcoming Children of Addiction (COA) Awareness Week, taking place from February 14th to the 20th. Two virtual events will be held including [PTACC Conversation With The Field: Standing Up For The Children](#) on February 17th and [Children at the Center of Addiction, A Voice for the Voiceless](#) on February 18th. The first event, hosted by the Police Treatment Community Collaborative (PTACC) Children and Family Strategy Area, will focus on the children and family members of individuals being considered for arrest deflection. The second event will feature panelists discussing specific aspects of the court systems and drug courts, recent research efforts on brain development and child health, and treatment for children and families affected by addiction.



Springboard Prize for Child Welfare

Aviv Foundation to offer awards for innovative child welfare plans

The Aviv Foundation announced that they will provide four awards of \$200,000 for innovation plans to improve child welfare and family support services. As described in the announcement, the idea behind the [Springboard Prize for Child Welfare](#) is to seed interesting proposals that would have a difficult time competing with traditional ones for philanthropic or government support, or strategies that have shown promise on a very small scale and could benefit from expansion. Eligibility for the award is expansive, including nonprofits, government agencies, individuals, and corporations. In addition, the foundation will set up a separate fund to help winners evaluate their impact. Applications are due by March 12th, 2021.
