

March 25, 2021



D.C. Update: NASADAD releases overview of the Synar provision, House members create bipartisan addiction and mental health task force, and more



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Meet the Member

Angie Stuckenschneider, Prevention Coordinator for State of Missouri

Angie Stuckenschneider serves as the Prevention Director for the Division of Behavioral Health, Missouri Department of Mental Health, where she is responsible for developing and implementing public policies in substance use prevention, mental health promotion, and prevention of mental illness and other disorders. She develops and administers prevention plans for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant, the use of State general funds, and administers competitively awarded discretionary grants. She has been with the Division of Behavioral Health since 2005 and with the Missouri Department of Mental Health since 1994. Ms. Stuckenschneider is the Principal Investigator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Zero Suicide Grant, Program Manager of SAMHSA's Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant, Principal Investigator of SAMHSA's Prevent Prescription Drug/Opioid Overdose-Related Deaths, Contract Manager for the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Tobacco Enforcement program, Senior Project Director of SAMHSA's Partnerships for Success (PFS) Grant, and manages the Prevention components of the State Opioid Response (SOR) Grant.



NASADAD National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors March 2021

An Overview of the Synar Provision: History, Impact of Tobacco 21 Legislation, and Recommendations

Background on Synar:

In 1992, Congress enacted the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Administration Reorganization Act (102-321) that included a provision referred to as the Synar Amendment, which required States and territories to enact and enforce laws prohibiting the sale or distribution of tobacco products to individuals under the age of 18.

In 1996, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued a regulation giving further guidance to States related to Synar implementation and enforcement. The regulation required States to conduct annual, unannounced inspections of tobacco retailers that provide a probability sample of the accessibility of tobacco products to minors under the age of 18. States had to meet at least an 80 percent compliance rate of retailers refusing tobacco sales to minors. A compliance rate below 80 percent would result in penalization of a State's SAPT Block Grant allocation of up to 40 percent. Over time, Congress worked with the Administration to offer an alternative penalty that was significantly less than the 40 percent marker, but required the State to generate funds to remedy the violation. No federal funding was ever provided to the managers of the SAPT Block Grant - State alcohol and drug agencies - to specifically support Synar implementation and enforcement activities.



FDA's Role:
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) plays an important role in regulating the sale of tobacco products. The FDA's Center for Tobacco Products (CTP) authorizes the sale of new and modified risk tobacco products with marketing orders, which are granted based on the product's risks to the population as a whole. Additionally, the FDA directs federal resources through contracts to States or third-party vendors to support compliance checks and enforcement. These resources are not necessarily allocated to the State alcohol and drug agency.

NASADAD releases overview of the Synar provision

NASADAD is pleased to announce the release of a new resource, "[An Overview of the Synar Provision: History, Impact of Tobacco 21 Legislation, and Recommendations.](#)" The document offers background on the Synar Amendment, which originally required States and territories to enact and enforce laws prohibiting the sale or distribution of tobacco products to individuals under the age of 18; a description of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) role in tobacco control; a review of the federal legislation that raised the minimum age of legal tobacco access to 21; the impact of the legislation on Synar; and implementation efforts in 2020, including those related to COVID-19.

Federal Agency Updates

Dr. Vivek H. Murthy confirmed as Surgeon General and Dr. Rachel Levine confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Health

On Tuesday, the United States Senate confirmed Dr. Vivek H. Murthy's nomination for Surgeon General of the Public Health Service and medical director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service. Dr. Murthy previously served as Surgeon General under former President Barack Obama and was also an advisor to the Biden campaign and transition. During his previous tenure, Dr. Murthy authored [Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health](#), which was the nation's first Surgeon General's Report on addiction. Dr. Murthy also wrote the first federal report on e-cigarettes, [Surgeon General's Report on E-cigarette Use Among Youth](#). During Dr. Murthy's Senate confirmation hearing, he told Congress that he wants to expand access to naloxone and medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction. He also noted the importance of investing in prevention services, especially in schools.



On Wednesday, the United States Senate also confirmed Dr. Rachel Levine to be Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Dr. Levine previously served as Secretary of Health for the State of Pennsylvania. During her tenure, she worked with other State agencies, including the Department of Drug and



Alcohol Programs (DDAP), led by NASADAD Member, Secretary Jennifer Smith, to address the opioid crisis. This work included the establishment of opioid prescribing guidelines, a statewide naloxone standing order prescription, training for medical students and promoting the benefits of substance use disorder services.

Capitol Hill Happenings

House members create bipartisan addiction and mental health task force

Representatives David Trone (D-MD), Ann Kuster (D-NH), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Jamie Herrera Beutler (R-WA) recently announced the creation of the Bipartisan Addiction and Mental Health Task Force. The new group combines Congressman Trone's Freshmen Working Group on Addiction and the Bipartisan Opioid Task Force, which was co-chaired by Reps. Kuster and Fitzpatrick last Congress. As described in a [press release](#) from Congressman Trone's office, the purpose of the new Task Force is to combine efforts to make the most progress possible on addiction and mental health in the 117th Congress. The 2021 Legislative Agenda for the Task Force includes addressing substance use and mental health disorders that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. In addition, the Task Force announced that it will host regular meetings with stakeholders, attend site visits, and work to create effective policies related to mental health and substance use disorders.

Around the Agencies

SAMHSA continues Virtual Learning Community on early diversion with webinar on housing access

On April 22, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) GAINS Center continues its [Virtual Learning Community](#) featuring webinars and discussion groups on early diversion with the series'

second installment, "Addressing the Critical Need for Housing and Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Improve Housing Access." Housing is a critical need for individuals experiencing homelessness who are in crisis and at risk for justice involvement. Presenters will discuss barriers to accessing housing including criminalization of the homelessness, lack of partnership development, funding issues, and myths and realities related to securing housing. Presenters will also address comprehensive strategies to improve housing access. For more information and access to registration, click [here](#).

EARLY DIVERSION VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMUNITY
Part 2
Addressing the Critical Need for Housing and Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Improve Housing Access
APRIL 22, 2021, 2-3 P.M. ET



Drug-Free Communities
Local Problems Require Local Solutions

CDC and ONDCP accepting applications for new DFC coalitions

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of

National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recently released a [funding opportunity announcement](#) (FOA) for the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program. This FOA is intended for new DFC coalitions, or those who have never received a DFC grant previously. As described in the announcement, these awards will support coalitions as they work with representatives from twelve sectors within their communities to implement activities such as providing information, enhancing

skills, and changing policies. Recipients can receive up to \$125,000 per year for up to five years and interested applicants are encouraged to attend a workshop webinar on March 25th from 3:30-5:00pm ET. Registration can be found [here](#). Applications for the DFC Program are due May 10th.

SAMHSA publishes series of advisories on substance use disorder treatment



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has published a series of Advisories based on existing Treatment Improvement Protocols (TIPs) and Technical Assistance Publications (TAPs). The first advisory, [Screening and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders Among Adolescents](#), includes recommendations for engaging adolescents in substance use disorder (SUD) risk assessment, screening, and treatment. The second advisory, [Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Substance Use Treatment](#) includes considerations for clinicians, screening and assessment tools, strategies for program administrators, and ethical and legal issues when working with this population. A third advisory, [Treating Substance Use Disorders Among People with HIV](#), provides guidance to providers for treating SUD among people with HIV and includes guidance from several federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. In future DC Updates, additional advisories will be covered.