



CT Association for Addiction Professionals

Date: March 14, 2015

To: Senator Terry Gerratana, Co-Chair of the Public Health Committee
Representative Matthew Ritter, Co-Chair of the Public Health Committee
Senator Joe Markley, Ranking Member
Representative Prasad Srinivasan, Ranking Member

Copy: Gov. Dannel Malloy

From: Barbara Fox, Vice President
CT Association for Addiction Professionals (CAAP)

Subj: CAAP's 2015 Advocacy Recommendations to Gov. Malloy's Bill 6856 An Act Concerning Substance Abuse and Opioid Overdose Prevention

I am submitting testimony to support Gov. Malloy's bill 6856.

As vice president of CAAP (CT Assoc. for Addiction Professionals) I fully support the governor's bill 6856 but would like to stress the three advocacy elements Susan Campion, CAAP's President, is suggesting to enhance the governor's bill. Below are the three elements Ms. Campion is proposing:

1. A Team Approach to the Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment of Opiate Addiction in Primary Care Settings- An Addiction Specialist and Primary Care Provider Collaboration
2. The Implementation of Uniform Standards of Practice in the Use of Suboxone, Medication-Assisted Treatment, by Public and Private Practitioners.
3. Addiction is a Primary Disease: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Recovery Management of Opioid Dependence equal to Treatment of Medical Disorders.

The bill the governor has submitted is quite comprehensive but including the advocacy initiatives of CAAP to the current bill would strengthen the bill and add evidence-based criteria to the bill.

When reading current guidelines for treatment of opiate/opioid use disorders it is consistent that medication assisted therapies (MAT) should be used in conjunction with psychosocial services. Pharmacotherapy is rarely sufficient by itself in the treatment of this disorder. Having the

psychosocial supports in place, either at the place of dispensing or at a referral agency has shown to have better outcomes than the medication alone.

Having a 'team approach', which would include a prescriber and addiction and mental health professionals, would augment treatment and hopefully increase a client's attempt at recovery.

Understanding that addiction is a primary disease – and treatable – is vital to the treatment given to those who come for help for opiate/opioid use, abuse or dependence. Oftentimes, those in the medical profession are given only basic education in addictions and having someone available to assess, diagnose and set up a treatment plan specific to addiction and/or mental health disorders is vital to the overall treatment of the client.

I sincerely hope that consideration of these initiatives will be reviewed when finalizing this bill.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara K. Fox". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara K. Fox, LADC
Vice President
CT Association for Addiction Professionals