



NAADAC 2020
Virtual Hill Day

October 6 – 7, 2020
A Virtual Experience

Addressing the Addiction Crisis: NAADAC 2020 Legislative Requests

The addiction crisis impacts millions of Americans. The COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the crisis. Reports are showing increases in substance use, along with increases in overdose related deaths. A White House drug policy office analysis from this summer shows an 11.4 percent increase in fatalities for the first four months of 2020. A National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded [study](#) also found that people with substance use disorders are more susceptible to COVID-19 and its complications. Now more than ever, access to quality, effective treatment and recovery services is critical to addressing our nation's addiction crisis.

How Can Congress Help?

Support Robust Funding for Substance Use Disorder Programs. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are increasing substance use and overdose deaths. As a country we must commit to building and maintaining a strong addiction workforce and infrastructure that can take on our nation's growing crisis in a way that helps individuals with substance use disorders find the treatment and recovery services they need.

- **NAADAC urges Congress to strengthen the addiction workforce and infrastructure by supporting:**
 - **A COVID-19 relief package that provides \$8.5 billion** in emergency funding for addiction and mental health treatment and recovery programs, along with passing the *Coronavirus Mental Health and Addiction Assistance Act* ([H.R. 6999/ S. 3825](#)) and the *Tele-Mental Health Improvement Act* ([H.R. 8060/S. 3792](#)).
 - **A Fiscal Year 2021 spending bill that provides a \$500 million** increase for the SAMSHA Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant, **\$25 million** for HRSA's Loan Repayment Program for SUD Treatment Workforce, and **\$15.7 million** for SAMHSA's Minority Fellowship Program.

Strengthen Behavioral Health Parity Laws. While current parity laws require insurers to treat substance use disorder and mental health care the same way they treat medical or physical care, the lack of enforcement has led to significant gaps in coverage for millions of Americans suffering addiction or mental health issues.

- **NAADAC calls on Congress to address these issues by passing the *Strengthening Behavioral Health Parity Act* ([H.R. 7539](#)) to strengthen existing substance use disorder and mental health parity laws.**

Address Addiction Professional Credentialing. Licensure and credentialing requirements vary greatly from state to state and serve as a barrier to entry, advancement, and retention for many addiction professionals. A standard, recognizable set of addiction professional credentials would provide clarity for providers and payers, as well as comfort to individuals seeking quality effective treatment and recovery services for themselves or their loved ones.

- **We urge Congress to work with NAADAC and other stakeholders in the addiction workforce to support national credentials that have been developed to ensure standardized training and education requirements are utilized to educate, train, and credential the next generation of addiction professionals.**