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March 7th, 2018

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
1139E Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Neal and Ranking Member Pallone:

I am writing on behalf of the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence, which represents over 1,100 Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) throughout the United States, including our 30 State Chapters.

We are extremely grateful that you and your colleagues are introducing legislation to support the development of Medicare reimbursement for Medicare eligible patients needing access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for their opioid use disorder (OUD) in the OTP setting.

OTPs are treating over 400,000 patients in the United States. These OTPs are regulated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in addition to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), State Opioid Treatment Authorities (SOTAs) and additional licensing branches of state government.

All of the OTPs must be accredited through a SAMHSA approved authority. They are the specialized hub treatment sites for opioid use disorder in this country. They provide an array of specialized treatment services, in addition to utilizing the three federally approved medications to treat this disorder (methadone/buprenorphine/injectable naltrexone).

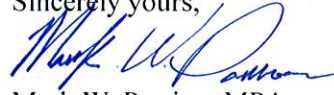
We have been working with federal agencies, especially CMS/Medicare, for many years to get a Medicare benefit so that Medicare beneficiaries would be able to access care in these specialized hub treatment sites. Your proposed legislation will enable this to happen, providing that you include some additional elements. These elements need to include the rich suite of services that are provided in addition to providing a realistic reimbursement to cover such services in addition to the medications. As you may know, there are many people who are Medicare eligible, who cannot get access to such care without such a benefit.

We will look forward to working with you and your staff to enhance your proposed legislation and will look forward to discussing this with you as a method of broadening the language to be certain that your legislation will be supporting the use of the suite of services offered through OTPs in addition to the federally approved medications as referenced above. Additionally, the proposed rate structure will present significant funding challenges for many states and Opioid Treatment Programs and that will need to be discussed as well.



Thank you once again for your interest in bringing this to fruition. Your proposed legislation will certainly increase access to treatment for Medicare beneficiaries needing access to care for their opioid use disorder as long as it includes the above elements.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark W. Parrino", is written over the typed name.

Mark W. Parrino, MPA
President