



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

ACMT American College
of Medical Toxicology



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2022

Media Contact

Rebecca Reid

410-212-3843

rreid@schmidtpa.com

**Addiction Medicine Leaders Respond to
President Biden's State of the Union Address**

*With Overdose Deaths at Record Levels, America's Response Must Be Commensurate
with the Magnitude of this Crisis*

ROCKVILLE, MD – The **American Society of Addiction Medicine, American College of Medical Toxicology, American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine, and the American College of Academic Addiction Medicine** issued the following statement today:

“During last night’s State of the Union, President Biden addressed America’s ongoing addiction and drug overdose crisis and talked about the need to invest in effective prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery efforts to save lives. Importantly, the President also expressed his solidarity and support for the millions of Americans in recovery.

Noteworthy initiatives outlined in a newly released [fact sheet](#) from the White House include:

- eliminating outdated rules that hinder access to addiction medications;
- increasing understanding of addiction medications so that patients and clinicians make informed choices;
- extending telehealth flexibilities for addiction treatment; and
- examining federal fund usage and opportunities to expand access to addiction treatment throughout criminal legal systems.

Earlier yesterday, the White House also released a new [Strategy to Address our National Mental Health Crisis](#) that includes important calls for increasing and diversifying the mental health and substance use disorder workforce, as well as expanding and strengthening insurance coverage parity for mental health and substance use disorder services.

Our organizations commend President Biden and his Administration for their leadership, resolve, and collaboration with addiction medicine stakeholders as we work together to confront this crisis. We further urge all national policymakers to unite around swift, bold, and comprehensive solutions to stem the loss of life and promote addiction treatment and recovery for all who need it.

With the United States recording [over 100,000 overdose deaths in a 12-month period](#)—the highest total on record—this is a watershed moment. Unfortunately, too few individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) are able to access the care they need. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), [40.3 million people over 12 lived with a substance use disorder in 2020](#), yet just 2.6 million (6.5 percent) received any SUD treatment.

Insufficient workforce, inadequate professional education, stigma, generally fragmented systems of care delivery and financing, and overly stringent, non-evidence based regulatory and legal policies perpetuate the addiction treatment gap and contribute to a horrific and unacceptable loss of life. With more Americans dying by the day to a treatable medical condition, the time for bold and comprehensive action is long overdue.”

###