



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

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ASAM Applauds Release of the White House's New National Drug Control Strategy

With drug overdose deaths at record levels, the Biden-Harris Administration's focus on expanding access to evidence-based addiction prevention and treatment, bolstering harm reduction efforts, and promoting recovery is critical to saving lives

Rockville, MD – Today, the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) praised the Biden-Harris Administration for releasing its inaugural [National Drug Control Strategy](#), a critical roadmap to help address America's addiction and overdose crisis.

"The Biden-Harris Administration's first National Drug Control Strategy represents a major step forward in the country's efforts to end the deadly addiction and overdose crisis," said William F. Haning, III, MD, DLFAPA, DFASAM, president of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. "ASAM applauds the Administration's focus on improving access to patient-centered, evidence-based treatment, strengthening prevention and harm reduction approaches, and promoting recovery. We look forward to working with the Administration and other stakeholders to implement many of the Strategy's important initiatives in the months ahead."

The 2022 National Drug Control Strategy is notable for its comprehensive approach. At a time when treatment is too often out-of-reach for Americans with addiction, the Strategy's provisions on ensuring adequate coverage and reimbursement for evidence-based addiction treatment services are laudable, as is the focus on efforts to strengthen the capacity of the country's addiction treatment workforce through education, loan reimbursement, and fellowship training programs. Moreover, the Biden-Harris Administration's emphasis on prevention, recovery, and harm reduction—including expanding access to naloxone, drug test strips, and syringe services programs—will strengthen public health and save lives.

Underscoring the need for payment reform for addiction treatment, the Strategy cites "insufficient insurance coverage, provider reimbursement rates that do not cover activities required to sustain a practice, and non-compliance with federal parity laws requiring certain insurance plans to provide comparable coverage of physical and behavioral health services"—all of which seriously affect individuals' access to addiction care.

Currently, there is a troubling gap between the number of people who need addiction treatment and the number of people who receive it—a testament to the tremendous barriers and lingering stigma associated with substance use disorder (SUD). The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [estimates](#) that just 2.7 million (6.5-percent) of the more than 41.1 million individuals who



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needed treatment for SUD in 2020 received care at a specialty treatment facility. Treatment barriers represent a contributing factor to the nation's record number of drug overdose deaths, which surged to [106,854 drug overdose deaths](#) in the 12-month period ending November 2021.

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About the American Society of Addiction Medicine

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), founded in 1954, is a professional medical society representing over 7,000 physicians, clinicians, and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public, supporting research and prevention, and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. For more information, visit www.ASAM.org.