



The Breaking Addiction Act of 2014

Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge (OH-11) has introduced the Breaking Addiction Act of 2014, legislation that is co-sponsored by Congressman Tim Ryan (OH-13). This legislation establishes a demonstration project to study the impact of allowing federal Medicaid reimbursement of substance abuse treatment provided in community-based Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMDs). It includes the following;

- Authorizes a five year demonstration project (limited to 8-10 states).
- Allows for federal reimbursement of services provided to Medicaid beneficiaries receiving treatment for a substance use disorder in community-based IMDs (Institutions for Mental Diseases).
 - “Community-based” refers to chemical dependency treatment facilities, rehabilitation centers, etc. and excludes hospitals.
- Requires a report from the Secretary of Health and Human Services(HHS) on the impact such a change would have on the provision of substance use disorder treatment services in this country
- Offers a model to expand cost-efficient and timely community-based treatment options to address the nation’s heroin/opiate epidemic

Background

- Over the past decade, federal and local governments have cracked down on prescription drug abuse and “pill mills.”
- As prescription painkillers became harder to obtain and more expensive, those addicted to opiates have increasingly turned to heroin as a relatively cheaper and more accessible alternative.
 - This origin of the current heroin crisis means it impacts people of all races and classes, and those in urban, suburban and rural areas.
 - According to the American Medical Association, 75% of heroin users were introduced to opiates through prescription drugs
 - From 2007 through 2012, the number of heroin users in the U.S. nearly doubled from 373,000 to 669,000.

Heroin Crisis in Ohio and in Northeast Ohio

- Since 2007, fatal drug overdoses have been the lead cause of accidental death throughout the State of Ohio.
- The heroin crisis has hit Northeast Ohio particularly hard.
- In 2013, **more people in Cuyahoga County died from heroin overdoses than homicides.**
- From 2007 through 2013, the number of people in Cuyahoga County who died as a result of a heroin overdose **increased nearly 400%, from 41 deaths in 2007 to 195 in 2013.**
- In Summit County, there were 52 heroin deaths in 2013 and 45 in 2012.
- Law enforcement, including the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, health care providers, and the local media have all called for action.

The IMD Exclusion

- As part of the original Medicaid statute, Congress barred federal Medicaid matching funds from going to IMDs, which are defined as facilities of more than 16 beds whose primary purpose is to serve those with mental diseases.
 - The exclusion was part of the original law to keep federal monies from state mental institutions which were simply “warehousing” individuals and not treating them.
 - **The IMD exclusion keeps nearly 15 million Medicaid beneficiaries from receiving the treatment they need, and indirectly, it limits the number of treatment beds available for more than 23 million Americans, regardless of health coverage status.**
- Substance use disorders are characterized as mental diseases, and, therefore, inpatient facilities which are specialized to treat addiction cannot receive federal Medicaid funds.