

VMS RESOLUTION

VERMONT PHYSICIANS CONFRONTING THE OPIOID CHALLENGE FACING VERMONTERS

As passed by VMS Council, October 18th, 2003

WHEREAS, opioid dependence is a brain-related medical disorder which can be effectively treated with resulting benefits to patients and to society; and

WHEREAS, opioid dependence, including heroin dependence, is a significant public health problem in Vermont; and

WHEREAS, the prevalence of this problem is escalating especially among Vermont's youth, with twice as many Vermonters in the 8th-12th grades reporting heroin use compared to the national average;¹ and

WHEREAS, the state does not currently have enough practitioners and clinics to treat the increasing number of Vermonters who agree to receive help; and

WHEREAS, many affected Vermonters who seek treatment from the substance abuse clinics around the state are placed on a long waiting list; and

WHEREAS, the VMS endorses the concept of prompt access to treatment for chemically dependent patients, regardless of the type of addiction; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the VMS work with the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP) and the UVM Area Health Education Center Program (AHEC) to inform Vermont physicians regarding the data on opioid dependency in Vermont; be it further

RESOLVED, that the VMS work with ADAP and the UVM AHEC program to encourage and facilitate the training of all of Vermont's primary care physicians and psychiatrists in buprenorphine treatment; be it further

RESOLVED that the VMS work with state agencies to encourage the availability of appropriate counseling services in addition to support treatment of patients with opioid dependency; be it further

RESOLVED that VMS work with public and private insurers to ensure that that they appropriately and adequately reimburse clinicians treating patients with opioid dependency; and be it further

RESOLVED, that VMS, ADAP and the UVM AHEC Program collaborate to make Internet buprenorphine treatment training readily accessible for Vermont physicians.

¹ 2001 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey