



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Joint State Government Commission
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Report Summary in Response to 2016 House Resolution No. 893
Opioid Addiction Treatment in Pennsylvania

House Resolution 893 of 2016 directed the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study and publish a report on the benefits, costs, and drawbacks of alternative opioid dependence treatment programs that utilize Federal Food and Drug Administration-approved medications. The report, *Opioid Addiction Treatment in Pennsylvania*, is now available on our website. Medications are used in many detoxification, treatment, and rehabilitation programs throughout Pennsylvania and the U.S. Whether or not MAT is included in a patient's plan, each plan includes other modalities that are integral to treatment and rehabilitation. Research shows no single approach, such as MAT or counseling, is as effective on its own as when multiple therapies are used in conjunction with one another.

Analogies may be drawn between addiction as a chronic disease and other common chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Dietary and nutritional counseling, support services, and lifestyle changes can provide helpful, healthful benefits to those afflicted. It is nonetheless accepted for many patients that medications are necessary. Conversely, in the absence of other treatments and supports, medications do not often yield long term positive outcomes.

This report provides background data and information on the scope of drug overdoses, opioids in particular, in Pennsylvania and the U.S. It examines the costs associated with illicit use of opioids, and provides a comprehensive review of the many types of treatments currently in use by detoxification, treatment, and rehabilitation programs. The report includes an overview of the numerous federal, state, and county agencies that regulate SUD programs, and also presents the roles of private sector insurers and accreditation bodies. The resolution asked for an analysis of the feasibility of reopening closed state hospitals as potential sites for drug treatment and rehabilitation centers. The topic was not considered viable by the PA Department of Health because some of the hospitals stand vacant and would be prohibitively expensive to reopen, the Commonwealth has divested itself of some of the properties, and others are in use for other public health purposes. Finally, the report presents information on programs that have earned national acceptance for their successes in Pennsylvania and other states.