

## CSAM Releases Results of Survey on Insurance Barriers to Medication-Assisted Treatment of Opioid Use Disorders

**T**he California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) conducted a statewide survey in September 2016 to assess insurance barriers in California to the treatment of patients with opioid use disorders.

The survey documented that insurance-imposed barriers to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) of opioid dependence continue to exist. Among the survey's findings:

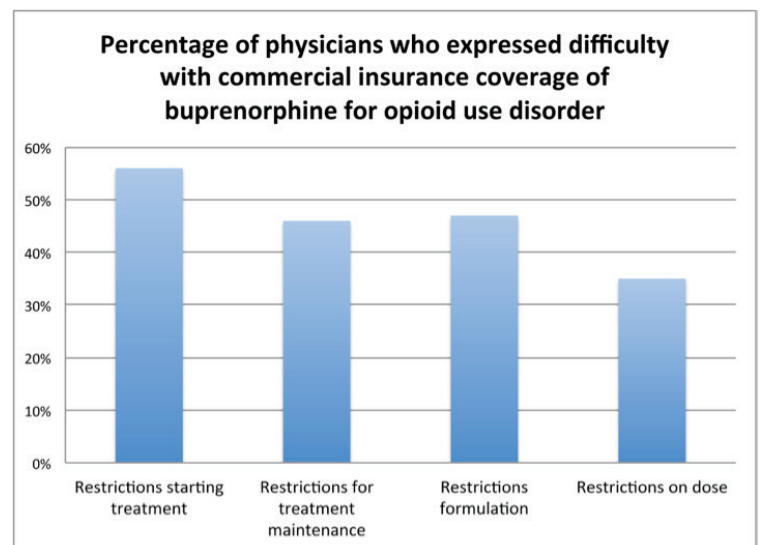
- 62% of physicians whose patients have insurance coverage find it difficult to access MAT
- 46% experience barriers to maintenance treatment
- 47% are unable to prescribe, due to coverage limits, the formulations that they believe are best for the patient
- 35% experience difficulty prescribing the dose needed by their patient

The survey and report were authored by David Kan, MD, CSAM President-Elect and Chair of the Committee on Opioids. It is being circulated to insurance providers and policy makers throughout California.

The survey is part of a series of CSAM Reports aimed at increasing access to treatment of substance use disorders. In December 2014, CSAM first began examining insurance coverage of substance use disorders and released an assessment of state health plans entitled: *Consumer Guide and Scorecard for Health Insurance Coverage in California for Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health*. Utilizing the largest consumer tools available — the Covered California website of 2014 bronze-level insurance plans from California providers, and searchable, online information including websites and drug formularies, CSAM reviewed 16 plans from 10 insurance companies. CSAM's Scorecard revealed widespread discrepancies in coverage of opioid use disorders, with no insurance plan providing the minimum standard of evidence-based care.

This year, CSAM produced three additional papers recommending to insurance carriers the minimum evidence-based coverage for opioid, alcohol and nicotine use disorders.

The conclusion of the report states: To get medications for diabetes — including insulin, which is deadly in overdose — phy-



sicians do not need to submit proof the patient is going to a nutritionist, or that they are exercising, or that they have followed through with lab tests. All of these are important for patient safety, and to lower morbidity and mortality. But no patient is “held hostage” and their insulin denied until these requirements are met. It is the opinion of CSAM that authorization requirements for buprenorphine violate parity requirements, as reflected in the findings from the recent report of the federal parity task force: “[if] the prior authorization requirement is applied more stringently to buprenorphine when used to treat opioid use disorder than it is applied to prescription drugs with similar safety risks to treat medical/surgical conditions. The plan’s prior authorization requirement on buprenorphine does not comply with the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Implementation Act.” (See White House Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Treasury, released October 27, 2016.)

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy, MD has called on all physicians to sign a pledge to: “Screen our patients for opioid use disorder and provide or connect them with evidence-based treatment.

*continued on page 7*

# Governor Jerry Brown Signs Bill for Physician Health and Wellness Program

**A** newly approved statewide physician health and wellness program will provide for early identification of physicians with addiction disorders. Thanks to legislation authored by Senator Cathleen Galgiani and signed by Governor Jerry Brown, physicians can be referred or self-refer to the program to find treatment, and it will monitor those physicians to ensure public safety.

The Medical Board of California (MBC) will soon issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking an entity to administer this program to initially be funded through the Medical Contingency Fund and participant fees. Physicians who self-report to the program, will have their confidentiality protected as long as the participant complies with the terms of program participation.

"We physicians understand the importance of protecting patients, and this program model is an effective way to safeguard patients from healthcare professionals who abuse alcohol and other drugs," said Monika Koch, MD, President of the California Society of Addiction Medicine. "A system based only on punishment causes those who need help to instead hide their problems, which creates a greater threat to the health and safety of California healthcare consumers. In many other states where our new program model already exists, it has been proven to protect patient safety, while assisting physicians and those who are trying to intervene with a physician to get the help they may need," added Dr. Koch. ■

## Also signed by the Governor

**Naloxone in Schools:** The Governor also signed AB 1748 by Assembly-member Chad J. Mayes, R-Yucca Valley that will help prevent overdose deaths. The bill will provide school medical offices with the opioid antagonist Naloxone and allow for trained nurses to administer the drug if needed on campus. CSAM actively lobbied for passage of this legislation.



DAVID KAN, MD (TOP) AND CHRISTY WATERS, MD (BOTTOM) TESTIFY FOR PHYSICIAN HEALTH PROGRAM BILL IN SACRAMENTO.

## 3rd Annual Weekend Retreat Meeting of Western Doctors In Recovery

**February 24-26, 2017 • Quail Lodge Resort • Carmel Valley, California**



Western Doctors in Recovery of the name of a group modeled after International Doctors In Alcoholics Anonymous (IDAA) — the worldwide fellowship of more than 9,900 healthcare professionals, and their families, who strive to help one another to achieve and maintain recovery from addictions. Western Doctors in Recovery (WDR) has a regional focus, bringing together health care professionals who convene annually in the western region of the United States for education and fellowship. Their third annual meeting, February 24-26 in Carmel Valley at the Quail Lodge Resort, offers an opportunity to connect with peers in a relaxed collegial setting with a variety of recovery activities -AA and Al-Anon- combined with a program of continuing medical education. Registration is open to physician and doctoral level healthcare professionals who help one another achieve and maintain recovery from addictions.

**For more information and to register visit <http://www.westerndoctorsinrecovery.com>.  
You can learn more about IDAA [here](#) and more about WDR [here](#).**

# CSAM Receives Grant to Provide Technical Assistance to Expand Medication-Assisted Treatment in Primary Care

In response to the opioid epidemic, governments on the federal and state levels have launched initiatives to expand the availability of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) of opioid use disorders through integrating buprenorphine into primary care. In 2016, the Department of Health and Human Services awarded \$94 million in Affordable Care Act funding to 271 health centers in 45 states, to improve and expand the delivery of substance abuse services in health centers, with a specific focus on treatment of opioid use disorders in underserved populations. In California, 36 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) received a total of more than \$12.5 million. Many of these programs have never prescribed buprenorphine.

CSAM has received an 18 month grant from the California Health Care Foundation to provide technical assistance to physicians and other clinicians working in these facilities.

One part of the grant is a series of 12 webinars aimed at physicians who are new to buprenorphine and working in primary care. This portion of the project is being coordinated by Jean Marsters, MD. The first webinar, held in October covered buprenorphine induction in a primary care setting and was viewed by 180 clinicians. The November webinar was on patient confidentiality. These webinars are available free to CSAM members with CME credit (live or as an enduring material on the CSAM Education Center ([cme.csam-asam.org](http://cme.csam-asam.org))).

The Medical Education and Research Foundation for the Treatment of Addiction (MERF) also received part of the grant to expand their scholarship program at the Essentials of Addiction



MERF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS AT 2016 ESSENTIALS  
OF ADDICTION MEDICINE CONFERENCE

Medicine Conference. Kenneth Saffier, MD is coordinating this part of the grant aimed at creating champions for integrating addiction treatment at their clinics. 12 scholarships were provided to physicians working in the Health Clinics. In addition to the mentored MERF experience, these physicians will attend quarterly seminars in 2017 to share experience and overcome obstacles.

The scholarship recipients were enthusiastic about the training they received. "I enjoyed getting practical feedback from colleagues in primary care working in underserved areas doing MAT," commented one. Another commented that it made a difference, "knowing you are not alone in the challenges of caring for this complex patient population." ■



## Webinars Available at the CSAM Education Center (*free for CSAM Members*)

**Next webinar will be held  
January 27, 2017 at 12:00 noon**

### **Effective Strategies for the Non-Compliant Buprenorphine Patient: Rational Monitoring and Contingency**

*Presented by Anna Lembke, MD and Greg Skipper, MD*

**Register at [csam-asam.org](http://csam-asam.org)**

- ▶ **Expanding Access to Medication Assisted Treatment Utilizing Nurse Care Managers**  
*Presented by Colleen T. LaBelle MSN RN-BC CARN*  
(Recorded December 16, 2016)

- ▶ **Patient Confidentiality and Medication-Assisted Treatment in California Primary Care Settings**  
*Presented by David Kan, MD and Harry Nelson, JD*  
(Recorded November 18, 2016)

- ▶ **Office-Based Buprenorphine: Patient Selection, Induction, and Management**  
*Presented by Soraya Azari, MD.*  
(Recorded October 28, 2016)

- ▶ **Buprenorphine Prescribing in Primary Care**  
*Presented by Soraya Azari, MD and Scott Steiger, MD*  
(Recorded June 2, 2016)

- ▶ **Formulations and Clinical Challenges in Prescribing Buprenorphine**  
*Presented by Matthew Torrington, MD*  
(Recorded March 8, 2016)

# New Addiction Medicine Board Examination to be Offered in Fall of 2017



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

**O**n November 30, 2016 the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) and The Addiction Medicine Foundation (TAMF) announced a major step forward in the integration of the field of addiction medicine into routine medical practice. Starting in the fall of 2017, ABPM will offer physicians who are certified by a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) the opportunity to become certified in the subspecialty of addiction medicine.

This announcement follows the recognition of the new subspecialty of addiction medicine by ABMS in 2015, and the approval of fellowship training in addiction medicine by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) in June, 2016.

The first five years that the exam is offered is the optimal time for physicians to become board certified in addiction medicine. During this time, individuals will NOT be required to complete an addiction medicine fellowship. After that, a one-year addiction medicine fellowship will be required.

For more information about taking the ABPM Board Certification examination, visit [https://www.theabpm.org/ADM\\_FAQs\\_112916.pdf](https://www.theabpm.org/ADM_FAQs_112916.pdf) ■

## Prepare Online for the Addiction Medicine Board Exam

CSAM offers several online resources to assist physicians preparing for the fall 2017 examination. Online materials are available at the CSAM Education Center ([cme.csam-asam.org](http://cme.csam-asam.org)).

### Essentials of Addiction Medicine 2016 Online

<http://cme.csam-asam.org/CSAM2016>

This review course is one of the nation's foremost annual gatherings of physicians and other healthcare professionals who specialize in the treatment of substance use disorders and practicing physicians in both primary care and other specialty fields who are seeking an overview of the field of Addiction Medicine. It is recommended as preparation for those sitting for the Addiction Medicine Board Exam. (16.5 AMA/PRA Category 1 Credits.)

### Addiction Medicine Certification Exam Preparation Track Online

<http://cme.csam-asam.org/content/american-board-addiction-medicine-certification-exam-preparation-track>

Features an interactive exam preparation with 700 board-style questions as well as the Addiction Medicine Study Guide. (15 AMA/PRA Category 1 Credits.)



## California Society of Addiction Medicine Addiction Medicine Review Course and Board Preparation Track

**August 24-27, 2017 | San Francisco Hilton Union Square**

*Registration opens in late January 2017*

Participants will come away with practical knowledge that can be applied to real-world experiences, as well as the knowledge needed to prepare for the ABMS Addiction Medicine Board Exam.

The Board Exam Preparation Track consists of 6 hours of Exam preparation, presenting several hundred questions as well as test taking tips. Participants receive access to the Interactive Self-Assessment Test in Addiction Medicine featuring more than 700 board-style questions as an Addiction Medicine Study Guide.

# CSAM Executive Council and Committee Chairs



CSAM EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS, JANUARY 31 IN BERKELEY

FROM LEFT: KERRY PARKER, CAE; MARTY WUNCH, MD; RANDOLPH HOLMES, MD; SHARONE ABRAMOWITZ, MD; ANGIE CHEN, MD; KAREN MIOTTO, MD; ANNA LEMBKE, MD; MONIKA KOCH, MD; STEVEN EICKELBERG, MD; JUDITH MARTIN, MD; DAVID KAN, MD; JEAN MARSTERS, MD; ITAI DANOVITCH, MD.

NOT PRESENT: ANTHONY ALBANESE, MD; JEFFERY WILKINS, MD; ROMANA ZVEREVA, MD.

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New Book by Anna Lembke, MD

## ***Drug Dealer, MD: How Doctors Were Duped, Patients Got Hooked, and Why It's So Hard to Stop***



ANNA LEMBKE, MD

**I**n *Drug Dealer, MD: How Doctors Were Duped, Patients Got Hooked, and Why It's So Hard to Stop*, Anna Lembke, MD, a member of CSAM's Executive Council and the Chief of Addiction Medicine and Assistant Professor at Stanford University School of Medicine, uncovers the unseen forces driving opioid addiction nationwide. Combining case studies from her own practice with vital statistics drawn from public policy, cultural anthropology, and neuroscience, she explores the complex relationship between doctors and patients, the science of addiction, and the barriers to successfully addressing drug dependence and addiction. Even when addiction is recognized by doctors and their patients, she argues, many doctors don't know how to treat it, connections to treatment are lacking, and insurance companies won't pay for rehab.

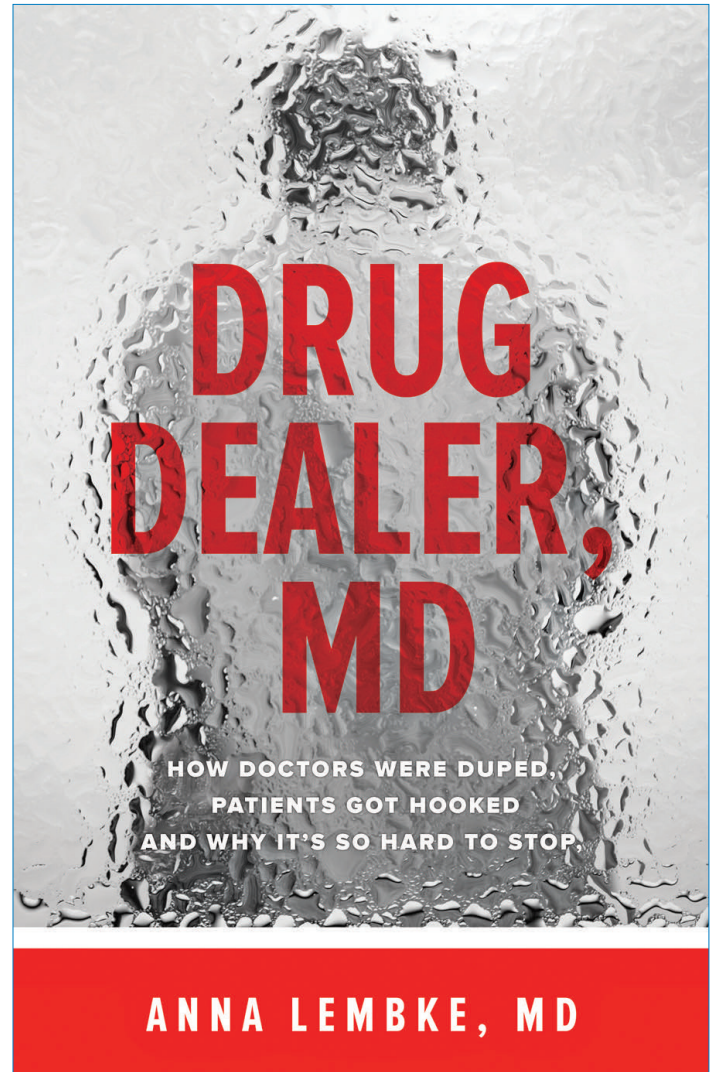
Full of extensive interviews—with healthcare providers, pharmacists, social workers, hospital administrators, insurance company executives, journalists, economists, advocates, and patients and their families—*Drug Dealer, MD*, is for anyone whose life has been touched in some way by addiction to prescription drugs.

Dr. Lembke gives voice to the millions of Americans struggling with prescription drugs while singling out the real culprits behind the rise in opioid addiction: cultural narratives that promote pills as quick fixes, pharmaceutical corporations in cahoots with organized medicine, and a new medical bureaucracy focused on the bottom line that favors pills, procedures, and patient satisfaction over wellness. Dr. Lembke concludes that the prescription drug epidemic is a symptom of a faltering health care system, the solution for which lies in rethinking how health care is delivered.

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"Lembke's novel viewpoint, brilliant synthesis of information, and use of patient stories bring the text to life," said Marcus A. Bachhuber, MD, Assistant Professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

*Drug Dealer, MD* is available through the Johns Hopkins University Press website: [jhu.edu](http://jhu.edu). Readers of *CSAM News* can claim a 30% discount on the book with the code "HNAF." It is available on Amazon and at better bookstores. ■



# Karen Miotto, MD, Receives Gary Nye Award from CMA



**K**aren Miotto, MD, was named the 2016 recipient of the California Medical Association (CMA) Gary S. Nye Award for Physician Health and Well-Being. Dr. Miotto is Chair of the CSAM Committee on Physician Well-being, Chair of the Board of Directors of Californians for Public Protection and Physician Health, and a member of CSAM's Executive Council.

In presenting the award to Dr. Miotto, the CMA recognized "her selfless devotion to advocating and promoting the well-being of her fellow physicians."

The award honors a CMA member who has made significant contributions toward improving physician health and wellness. The award was established in 2009 in honor of Gary Nye, MD, a leader in bringing attention and developing solutions for physician impairment and rehabilitation. ■

## Results of Survey on Insurance Barriers

*continued from page 1*

Physicians are in a unique position of leadership when it comes to this epidemic — they are on the front lines witnessing the impact every day from overdoses to diseases including hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS. This survey is just one of the ways CSAM is actively taking up this pledge to ensure that the barriers to accessing treatment for opioid use and other substance use disorders are overcome in California and across the U.S., and to help people stop abusing drugs and resume productive lives.

The full report is available on the CSAM website ([csam-asam.org](http://csam-asam.org)).

Also available on the website:

- Minimum Insurance Benefits for Patients with Opioid Use Disorder by David Kan, MD and Tauheed Zaman, MD
- Minimum Insurance Benefits for Patients with Alcohol Use Disorders by Anna Lembke, MD, David Kan, MD, and Tauheed Zaman, MD
- Minimum Insurance Benefits for Patients with Nicotine and Tobacco Use Disorder by Smita Das, MD, PhD, MPH, Cathy McDonald, MD, and Lori Karan, MD
- Consumer Guide and Scorecard for Health Insurance Coverage in California for Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health (12/2014) ■

## Welcome New CSAM Members

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# SAVE THE DATE

## **California Society of Addiction Medicine Addiction Medicine Review Course and Board Preparation Track**



**August 24-27, 2017 | San Francisco Hilton Union Square**

*More details on page 4.*