Introduction

The Roadmap for Promoting Health and Justice: A Smarter, More Effective National Drug and Alcohol Policy provides a comprehensive and detailed set of recommendations for improving our national drug and alcohol policies to improve health and public safety and save lives and resources. Here is a quick look at the recommendations in the report.

Recommendations to Strengthen the Health Responses to Addiction

Ensure Strong Coverage of and Access to Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health (SUD/MH) Services and Medications in Private Insurance

- States should ensure Essential Health Benefits packages in all qualified health plans in insurance exchanges have strong and specific coverage for SUD and MH
- HHS and states should work closely together to ensure that coverage meets the parity and anti-discrimination requirements of the ACA and the federal parity law, including collecting the data required to ensure compliance and quality
- Health Insurance Marketplaces should ensure that enrollees can easily identify and choose the health coverage that is best for them
- Network adequacy standards that ensure timely access to SUD/MH benefits should be developed and enforced

Provide Strong Coverage of and Access to SUD/MH Services and Medications in Medicaid and other Publicly Funded Programming

- HHS and states should design Medicaid benefits and eligibility systems to ensure that eligible individuals with SUD/MH can enroll and access needed services and medications
- HHS and states should ensure that all newly-eligible and traditional Medicaid beneficiaries receive comprehensive health coverage, including coverage for SUD and MH services and medications, at parity with other covered benefits
- Federal regulators should promptly finalize the recently proposed rule on the application of the federal parity law to Medicaid managed care, Medicaid Alternative
Benefits Plans, and CHIP. Federal and state regulators should continue working to ensure that parity is fully implemented and enforced in these programs.

- The federal government should modify the IMD exclusion to ensure that everyone with SUD/MH treatment needs can obtain appropriate care.
- All states should implement the Medicaid Health Home option and design systems to ensure that the SUD/MH needs of all enrollees will be addressed.
- The full continuum of SUD/MH services and medications should be covered and fully accessible to people enrolled in Medicaid.
- Federal and state governments should support and fund public education on overdose prevention, recognition, and response, and tools that are effective in preventing overdose death should be widely available. Federal and state governments should also support evidence-based public health interventions, including syringe exchange programs, which increase access to health care and decrease transmission of HIV, viral hepatitis, and other blood-borne diseases.

**Invest in the SUD Service Infrastructure**

- Ensure that the full continuum of SUD care is available in every community, and invest in SUD treatment systems that are patient-centered and better reflect the chronicity of substance use disorders by promoting effective chronic disease prevention and management.
- Invest in building new treatment capacity and strengthening the infrastructure of the existing system.
- Assist SUD and MH providers to create needed health information technology.
- Increase investment in substance use education and training and initiatives to attract and maintain a diverse and culturally competent addiction workforce that is prepared for changes to the health care system.
- Assist SUD providers in adapting to changes in payment and reimbursement mechanisms.

**Preserve the Safety Net for the Continuum of SUD Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Support Services**

- Ensure the safety net, including the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, remains strong for people and services that remain uncovered by the ACA.
- Strengthen substance use prevention.


**Provide Strong Coverage for and Access to SUD/MH Care for Justice-Involved Individuals**

- Ensure all eligible justice-involved people are enrolled in appropriate health coverage
- Justice-involved people should be engaged in SUD and MH care as early as possible. They should be connected to crisis intervention centers, community-based SUD and MH care, and other evidence-based services
- Offer medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for SUD as a treatment option at all stages of the criminal justice system
- Improve continuity of care for people returning to the community from the criminal justice system

**Expand Research on Substance Use Disorders**

**Recommendations to Eliminate Discrimination Against People with Drug/Alcohol and Criminal Histories**

**Protect People in Early Recovery or Entering Treatment from Discrimination**

- Ensure that the Americans with Disabilities Act protects people in early recovery and those who are willing to enter treatment

**Ensure People with Histories of SUD or Drug Convictions Can Access Public Benefits**

- Restore SSI/SSDI benefits for people with substance use disorders
- Eliminate the TANF and SNAP drug felony ban that limits access to nutrition assistance and cash support

**Restore Voting Rights**

- Restore the voting rights of people with criminal records

**Improve Access to Housing For People with Criminal Records**

- Eliminate statutory barriers to housing for people with criminal records or histories of drug or alcohol misuse
• Reduce regulatory barriers and discrimination that limit access to housing for people with criminal records or histories of drug or alcohol misuse

**Promote Educational Opportunities for People with Criminal Records**

• Restore Pell Grant eligibility for in-prison postsecondary education and eliminate the student aid ban for students with drug convictions

• Encourage post-secondary institutions to adopt admissions policies that do not unfairly discriminate against students with criminal records

**Increase Employment of People with Criminal Records**

• Eliminate or reduce the harmful impacts of laws and regulations that prevent qualified people from working in certain industries

• Require that background checks are fair, accurate, and complete and expand opportunities for criminal record sealing and expungement

• Adopt fair hiring policies

• Offer specialized workforce services for people with criminal records

**Relieve People of Collateral Consequences**

• Reduce unnecessary collateral consequences and impose them only as part of sentencing

• Offer procedures for people who have completed their sentence to be relieved of collateral consequences

**Improve Reentry Planning and Services**

• Reauthorize and fully fund the Second Chance Act

• Increase effective prison and jail based recidivism reduction programming

• Improve reentry planning

• Make the federal Interagency Reentry Council permanent and create state-level reentry councils

**Expand the use of Alternatives to Incarceration**

• Increase the number of offenses for which Alternatives to Incarceration are a permissible or preferred sentencing option

• Provide funding incentives for U.S. Attorneys offices and other prosecutors’ offices that prioritize Alternatives to Incarceration as sentences for defendants they prosecute
• Provide financial and career incentives for prosecutors who demonstrate a commitment to Alternatives to Incarceration and incorporate the use of Alternatives to Incarceration into their job performance measures

Pass the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act