

MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 33-18

INTRODUCED BY: MedChi's Public Health Committee
Baltimore City Medical Society

SUBJECT: Medication-Assisted Treatment in Prisons

1 Whereas, Medication-Assisted Treatment¹(MAT) is the use of medications, in combination with counseling and
2 behavioral therapies, to provide a “whole-patient” approach to be treatment of substance use disorders; and

3
4 Whereas, research shows that a combination of medication and therapy can successfully treat these disorders; and

5
6 Whereas, for some people struggling with addiction, MAT can help sustain recovery; and

7
8 Whereas, MAT is primarily used for the treatment of addiction to opioids, such as heroin and prescription pain
9 relievers that contain opiates; and

10
11 Whereas, the medications used in MAT are approved by the Food and Drug Administration; and

12
13 Whereas, MAT programs are clinically driven and tailored to meet each patient's needs; and

14
15 Whereas, the number of individuals potentially in need of MAT is estimated to be 24,887² opioid users, 18,916 of
16 which are heroin users; and

17
18 Whereas, the MAT treatment capacity in Baltimore City is only 17,587, leaving a capacity deficit of 7,300; and

19
20 Whereas, MAT in jails, prisons, and central booking is limited³; and

21
22 Whereas, many prisoners are often forced to withdraw in inhumane ways, which may violate their 8th Amendment
23 rights protecting them from cruel and unusual punishment, and the Supreme Court case *Estelle v. Gamble* (1976),
24 which defined a “deliberate indifference to serious medical need” as “cruel and unusual⁴”; and therefore be it

25
26 Resolved, that MedChi support the expansion of Medication-Assisted Treatment offered in Maryland jails,
27 prisons, and central booking.

28
29
30 At its meeting on September 22, 2018, the House of Delegates referred Resolution 33-18 to the Board of Trustees.

¹ <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/treatment#medications-used-in-mat>

² http://www.bhsbaltimore.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/OTP-Capacity-Report_01_27_17_FINAL.pdf

³ <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/3/13/17020002/prison-opioid-epidemic-medications-addiction>; <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/429/97/>

⁴ 429 U.S. 97 (1976); <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/429/97/>