

MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 48-18

INTRODUCED BY: Baltimore County Medical Association

SUBJECT: Listing Methadone on the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

1 Whereas, Methadone is one of the 3 medications used in Medication-Assisted Treatments for
2 Opioid Addiction in Opioid Treatment Programs in the US (the others being Buprenorphine and
3 Naltrexone;) and
4

5 Whereas, Methadone has been intensely studied for this purpose since 1964 and is the oldest
6 drug used for this purpose; and
7

8 Whereas, according to SAMHSA it “has been used for decades to treat people who are addicted
9 to heroin and narcotic pain medicines. When taken as prescribed, it is safe and effective. It
10 allows people to recover from their addiction and to reclaim active and meaningful lives.”¹; and
11

12 Whereas it works by “(lessening) the painful symptoms of opiate withdrawal and blocks the
13 euphoric effects of opiate drugs such as heroin, morphine and codeine, as well as semi-synthetic
14 opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone.”²; and
15

16 Whereas, “Patients taking methadone to treat opioid addiction must receive the medication under
17 the supervision of a physician ... and through an opioid treatment program certified by
18 SAMHSA”³; and
19

20 Whereas, although Methadone is effective when used to treat opioid addictions, it, itself, is also
21 addicting and is sought after by addicts not in treatment when their preferred drug of use may not
22 be available or in the quantity usually used; and
23

24 Whereas, “other medications may interact with methadone and cause heart conditions”⁴; and
25

26 Whereas, because of its longer duration of action taking some medications outside the program
27 can have a greater risk of unintended overdoses; and
28

29 Whereas, under Maryland law a treating physician cannot determine if a patient who comes to
30 him/her and requests Methadone for a legitimate medical complaint is already being treated in a
31 Opioid Treatment Program on Methadone unless the patient confides that information to the
32 doctor because the Methadone Treatment Clinics have been specifically exempted from
33 reporting to the MD PDMP; and
34

35 Whereas, neither, of the other medications used in Medication-Assisted Treatments for Opioid
36 Addiction in Opioid Treatment Programs, i.e. Buprenorphine and Naltrexone, have such a

1 restriction; therefore be it

2
3 Resolved, that MedChi work legislatively, and in regulation, that the prescribing of Methadone
4 by all medical providers and treatment programs be included in the PDMP database so that
5 physicians who are caring for patients in pain practices and opiate treatment programs can find
6 out if anyone else may be prescribing this medication to their patients to prevent diversion and
7 also to prevent possible adverse medical consequences.

8
9
10 At its meeting on September 22, 2019, the House of Delegates referred Resolution 48-18 to the
11 Board of Trustees with a request for a report back at the Fall 2019 meeting.

12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44 References

45 1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration –
46 <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/treatment/methadone>.

47 2. *ibid.*

48 3. *ibid.*

49 4. *ibid.*