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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Whereas, the number of individuals potentially in need of MAT is estimated to be 24,887\(^2\) opioid users, 18,916 of which are heroin users; and

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

Whereas, MAT in jails, prisons, and central booking is limited\(^3\); and

Whereas, many prisoners are often forced to withdraw in inhumane ways, which may violate their 8\(^{th}\) Amendment rights protecting them from cruel and unusual punishment, and the Supreme Court case \textit{Estelle v. Gamble} (1976), which defined a “deliberate indifference to serious medical need” as “cruel and unusual”\(^4\); and therefore be it

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

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

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1 https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/treatment#medications-used-in-mat
4 429 U.S. 97 (1976); https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/429/97/