



MOAR, Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery
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SPEAKING OUT FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY!

MOAR is a statewide recovery community organization activating its mission to organize recovering individuals, families, and friends into a collective voice; educating the public about the value of recovery from alcohol and other addictions.

We envision a society where addiction is treated as a significant public health issue and recovery is recognized as valuable to our communities.

We are working in coalition with allied organizations to implement strategies to increase access to treatment and recovery services, as we celebrate the value of recovery.

- *Massachusetts ranks among the top 5% of states for alcohol and drug use among adults and youth (NSUDH)*
- *From 2001-2004, the MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services funding was cut by nearly 50%.*

**Now Thanks to The 2008 Leadership of
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee Chaired by Representative Ruth Balser and Senator Gale Candaras,
Assistant Majority Leader Senator Tolman; Senate President Therese Murray; House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi;
The Ways and Means Committees; MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services with MOAR, Coalitions, Parent Groups and You!**

Your Voices are Being Heard!

- **2009 MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services Budget Makes History with about \$8Million More than 2008!**
- **MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services Strategic Plan Outcomes:**
 - 2 Residential Diversion to Treatment Programs vs Prison for Low Level Offense in the making for 2009
 - Three Recovery High Schools in Springfield, Boston, and Beverly with graduations
 - Statewide Adolescent Crisis Stabilization Unit—a 25 bed detox with follow up, now in Worcester
 - A new male Section 35 rehabilitation unit for men, who are civilly committed, is on the horizon
 - Highpoint Tranquility Inn New Bedford, Women's Section 35, has been at full capacity for over a year
 - More alcohol and other drug education in public schools
 - Six plus hospital emergency rooms with alcohol and other drug screening capacity
 - Approximately \$2.7 million more in long-term, residential, addiction recovery service contracts
 - 6 Regional Step Down Services, post detox, (not always required), approximate 30 day residential rehab
 - 6 Regional Recovery Engagement Centers with a variety of support services are in the plans
 - Office of Youth and Young Adult Services with Family Involvement
- **2006 Oxycontin Commission chaired by Rep. Peter Koutoujian found:
Oxycontin and other prescription drug addiction increased 950% in 10 years,
Opioid-related deaths increased 63.5% from 1999-2005.
The overdoses continue to manifest and NARCAN is being piloted to keep people alive**

The outcomes are proposed policies, plus state and federal funded coalitions to make following a reality.

- Strategic Prevention Framework to address drug overdoses as well as underage drinking
- Improved prescription monitoring
- Community, parent and teacher education
- Safer storage of prescription medication
- A statewide disposal program for unused pills
- Increased Access Throughout The Continuum of Care

MOAR AGENDA AND VISION FOR 2008

▪ **Provide Insurance Parity for Addiction Treatment -Legislative proposals**

(H4423 by Rep. Balsler passed House and now to Senate; S607 by Senator Moore, In Study)

would provide the same levels of health insurance coverage for addiction (children, family, adult – Rep Balsler’s bills call for full mental health and substance use disorder parity) with other diseases. Treatment is less expensive than alternatives, such as not treating or imprisonment. Massachusetts would save \$6 to \$25 million annually under parity. Let’s end insurance discrimination. Treatment costs on average \$7,000 annually; the untreated medical costs of substance abuse are \$14,000 annually.

▪ **Provide Insurance Reimbursement for Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor I, now in study, sent from Finance Committee**

Legislative proposals (H1118 sponsored by Rep. Walsh and S642 sponsored by Senator Tolman)

would require insurers to reimburse for the services of a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor I. Through insurance reimbursement, it will permit individuals and their families who suffer from, or are affected by alcohol and other drug abuse or addiction, to choose the human services professional most appropriate for their needs.

▪ **Provide Access to Treatment Right Away, in The Right Way**

Legislative Proposal (H1897 sponsored by Rep. Rushing) in House and Ways Means Committee

One out of every five people seeking addiction treatment is turned away. In Massachusetts, 570,343 people in have substance use disorders, of which 117,424 are seeking treatment but can not gain access! This bill sets up a format to provide immediate access and appropriate continuum of care services

▪ **Provide a Minimum of 30 Days Treatment when Addiction Becomes Life Threatening**

Legislative Proposals (S2494 sponsored by Senator Tolman) in Health Care Financing

In 2005, 14 % of Suicides and 7% of Homicides, and in 2004, 475 Fatal Overdoses were due to drug (mostly opiate) and alcohol use. This bill amends current Section 35 (civil commitment) for up to 90 days for individuals, whose alcohol or other drug addiction is life threatening to self or others. Less than 30 days is often not enough to heal from withdrawal and focus on recovery life skills.

▪ **Provide Improved Access to Employment, Education and Housing with CORI Reform**

Legislative Proposals (H1416 –in study) or amend (H4476) in Judiciary Committee

MA Alliance to Reform CORI (MOAR is a member of MARC), is the mobilizing force to make the following a reality, which will reduce barriers to employment and housing for people who have a favorably ending case (e.g., not guilty), and/or are demonstrating positive, changed lives. The goal is to:

- Implement automatic sealing of favorably ending cases (e.g., not guilty)
- Require that only convictions and open cases be reported to non-law enforcement entities
- Prohibit employers from discriminating against CORI subjects based solely on a CORI
- Reduce length of time required to seal misdemeanor to 3 years and felony records to 7 years

▪ **Provide a Substance Abuse Health Protection Fund**

Legislative Proposal (S1144 sponsored by Senator Marian Walsh in study)

The Health Protection Fund would be managed by MA Department of Public Health to assure treatment for the uninsured, across state agencies covering corrections, social services, education, prevention, plus driver and alcohol education programs. The fund will be financed by lifting the current exemption on the 5 % sales tax on the retail sale of alcohol beverages for off premises consumption. This act is estimated to realize \$92 million in one year.

• **Provide Violence Prevention - Legislative Proposal (H4348 Now Law!)**

This legislation seeks to improve the safety and health of victims of violence who seek medical care by increasing access to programs that provide information, resources, and advocacy to victims.

• **Provide Court Diversion of Low Level Offenders (H1912 Rep. Martin Walsh - Judiciary Committee sent to study)** The bill allows MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services treatment oversight vs incarceration.