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**Date:** 11/30/2016 12:03:43 PM  
**Subject:** FACT SHEET: Obama Administration Marks Progress in Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Research

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## **FACT SHEET: Obama Administration Marks Progress in Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Research**

President Obama made health care reform a reality for America. He also recognized that substance use disorders are a critical public health issue. Today at the White House, Administration officials and other leaders from across the country highlighted the progress that has been made over the past eight years in substance use disorder prevention, treatment, recovery, and research.

In particular, the President has made clear that addressing the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic is a priority for his Administration and has called for \$1.1 billion in new funding for States to expand access to treatment. This week Congress is considering legislation to act on the President's request and provide \$1 billion in new funding to combat the opioid epidemic.

The Administration's balanced public health and public safety approach to drug policy is built on the scientific research demonstrating that substance use disorder is a chronic disease of the brain that can be successfully prevented and treated, and from which people can recover. The Administration has directed Federal agencies to expand community-based efforts to prevent drug use before it begins, empower healthcare workers to intervene early at the first signs of a substance use disorder, expand access to treatment for those who need it, support the millions of Americans in recovery, and pursue targeted approaches to drug enforcement.

A full report on how Administration actions taken over the past eight years have expanded resources and protections for people with substance use disorders is available [HERE](#).

Highlights include:

- The Affordable Care Act created the largest expansion of mental health and substance use disorder coverage in a generation. It is estimated that the ACA expanded mental health and substance use disorder benefits and parity protections to more than 60 million people.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued its Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain – the Agency's first-ever recommendations for primary care clinicians on prescribing opioids. Subsequently, more than 60 medical schools, nearly 200 nursing schools and more than 50 pharmacy schools committed to prescriber training.
- The Surgeon General's first-ever Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health addressed alcohol, illicit drugs, and prescription drug misuse, with chapters dedicated to neurobiology, prevention, treatment, recovery, health systems integration and recommendations for the future. It provided an in-depth look at the science of substance use disorders and addiction, called for a cultural shift in the way Americans talk about the issue, and recommended additional actions to prevent and treat these conditions, and promote recovery.
- SAMHSA finalized a rule in July 2016 that allows practitioners who have had a waiver to prescribe buprenorphine for up to 100 patients for a year or more, to now obtain a waiver to treat up to 275 patients. As of October 2016, 2,400 practitioners have applied for and been granted waivers to prescribe at the increased limit—improving access to buprenorphine, which is prescribed along with psychosocial supports as part of MAT.