

S.2074 - Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act of 2019

Senators Maggie Hassan and Lisa Murkowski

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) has been endorsed by the World Health Organization, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, experts at FDA, and the Surgeon General,¹ as the gold standard for treating individuals struggling with substance use disorder.

Individuals seeking access to MAT as part of their treatment and recovery plan face stigma associated with substance use treatment, and a lack of providers able to prescribe MAT. As a result, it is estimated that only 20 percent of Americans with opioid use disorder receive specialty addiction treatment.²

One major barrier to access is an outdated and burdensome requirement that providers receive a waiver to prescribe buprenorphine, one of the most widely-used medications to treat opioid addiction. This outdated waiver requirement limits access, and reflects a longstanding stigma around substance use treatment, even as the availability of opioids remains widespread.

Buprenorphine is a safe, effective and life-saving treatment for individuals suffering from substance use disorder, yet the waiver requirement severely limits its availability. **[Twenty-two state departments of health](#) and [thirty-nine state Attorneys General](#) have advocated for removal of the waiver requirement**

The bipartisan **Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act** would eliminate this restrictive waiver requirement and allow health care providers to prescribe buprenorphine, a proven medication-assisted treatment that has helped save the lives of countless Americans struggling with substance use disorder, yet remains inaccessible to far too many.

Specifically, the **Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act** would:

- Eliminate the requirement that practitioners apply for a waiver through the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in order to prescribe buprenorphine for substance use disorder treatment. Practitioners would still be subject to their state's licensure requirements.
- Require that the Secretary of Health and Human Services conduct a national campaign to educate practitioners and encourage integration of substance use treatment into their practices

For more information, please contact Ian Hunter in Senator Hassan's office (ian_hunter@hassan.senate.gov) or Anna Dietderich in Senator Murkowski's office (anna_dietderich@murkowski.senate.gov)

¹ <https://www.shatterproof.org/treatment/MAT>

² https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/aatod_2018_final.pdf