

Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services

~ Saving Lives, Saving Dollars ~

FY26 State Budget Request

The *Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services* (MCAS) brings together a group of organizations that advocate for investments in harm reduction, treatment, prevention, and recovery support services for people with substance use disorders. **The coalition focuses solely on the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services operational budget (Line Item 4512-0200).**

Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that overdose deaths in Massachusetts have declined 34% from the most recent peak month to 1,819 overdose deaths in September 2024. This trend indicates efforts are working, but any preventable death is unacceptable. To recognize and continue to respond to the urgency of this crisis, MCAS recommendations focus on interventions to decrease overdoses, support the substance use treatment workforce, and increase access to care that is culturally, ethnically, and linguistically competent.

For the FY26 Budget, MCAS respectfully requests the following in new and continued investments:

- **\$15 million for low threshold housing for homeless individuals with substance use and co-occurring disorders at risk of HIV.** This funding would enable BSAS to continue to procure congregate care or individual housing units that do not require sobriety for placement and provide supervised case management services. The goal of this model is to reduce homelessness, improve health outcomes, and advance health equity. (Funded at \$12.5 million in FY24. Funded at \$10 million in FY25. Our understanding is that at least \$2.5 million from a funding source other than the state budget is being used to keep services level for FY25.)
- **\$3 Million for the Massachusetts Access to Recovery (MA-ATR) program.** MA-ATR offers comprehensive care coordination, job readiness, skills training, and access to services for individuals who are re-entering the community post-incarceration, pregnant women, and veterans. The program saves the state money in healthcare, incarceration, and social costs through the empowerment of individuals and has served over 26,000 individuals throughout the state. MA-ATR continues to be funded at \$7 million by SAMHSA through the Federal State Opioid Response (SOR) grant, and \$3 million by the state. (Funded at \$3 million in FY24. \$3 million passed by the legislature but vetoed by the Governor in FY25.)
- **\$1.5 million for implementation of recovery coach licensure** established by *An Act relative to treatments and coverage for substance use disorder and recovery coach licensure* (Chapter 285 of the Acts of 2024).
- **\$5 million to provide technical assistance to substance use treatment providers.** This funding allows BSAS to assist providers with medications for addiction treatment, medication management, and service people with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. (Funded at \$5 million in FY24. Not included in FY25.)
- **\$3 million for BSAS to provide technical assistance to providers serving communities of color,** including what is required to become a licensed BSAS provider and how to track and respond to procurements. (Funded at \$3 million in FY24. Language authorizing spending to provide technical assistance and training to increase the number of providers and to support existing providers delivering culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse services in communities of color but no dollar amount included in FY25.)

- **\$750,000 to expand transportation programs** for individuals accessing substance use treatment services, to decrease barriers to care. (Funded at \$750,000 in FY24. \$750,000 passed by legislature but vetoed by the Governor in FY25.)
- **\$1.5 million to expand community-based drug checking services** to strengthen the response to the opioid crisis. The drug supply is a key factor in drug-related deaths, and community drug checking provides essential health and safety information for people who use drugs and their communities. This funding will allow BSAS to enhance these services, improving drug supply safety, promoting empowerment and behavior change, and engaging hard-to-reach populations.

Members of MCAS include:

Association for Behavioral Healthcare (ABH)
 EndHepC MA Coalition
 Fenway Health
 Gavin Foundation
 Learn 2 Cope
 Lynch & Fierro Law Firm
 Massachusetts Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (MAADAC)
 Massachusetts Black Alcohol & Addiction Counselors Council (MBAC)
 Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance (MHSA)
 Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)
 Massachusetts Public Health Alliance (MPHA)
 Recovery Homes Collaborative of Massachusetts (RHC)
 RIZE Massachusetts
 Tapestry Health
 The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC)
 Victory Programs
 Western Massachusetts Substance Addiction Providers Association (WMSAPA)

Please contact Hannah Koepper on behalf of MCAS at hannah@moar-recovery.org for any additional information.