



THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF ADVOCATES FOR BUPRENORPHINE TREATMENT

– naabt.org –



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– *Keeping You Informed* –

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TOP STORY

On 8-02-2005 President Bush signed into law the long-awaited amendment to the Controlled Substances Act, DATA-2000.

This amendment removes the 30-patient limit on group medical practices that treat opioid dependence with Suboxone. This change now allows every certified doctor to prescribe Suboxone up to the individual physician limit of 30 patients. No further paperwork is required for each certified physician in group practices to increase their patient roster to 30.

The law is effective as of August 2, 2005. This law has no change on single-physician practices which still restricts treatment of only 30 patients for opioid dependence at any one time. The 8 hour training course and special DEA# are still required. For more detailed information on the law, or to read the entire law see: www.naabt.org

REACTION TO THE LAW

Several articles in reaction to the news of the new law, praised the change. Many, however, expressed that they did not believe it went far enough. Most doctors asked said that the 30-patient limit should be lifted altogether, especially for addiction specialists. It is believed that patients will suffer, not only because of lack of access but those that do get treatment will likely be forced to accept a shorter treatment period to allow an opening for others in need. This predicted trend to shorten or eliminate maintenance treatment will likely result in a lower overall success rate than if maintenance was unrestricted. It will have an unanticipated effect of making Suboxone® treatment less effective than it actually can be. The limit is also suspected to be inadvertently driving a black market for Suboxone. Patients are taking less than prescribed so that they can share it or sell it to someone who is waiting to get treatment.



News Stories

For the complete text of these stories and others, please visit naabt.org

where news is posted as it happens

08/11/2005

A Discreet Way to Beat Addiction – Law Expands Access to Pill That Helps People Hooked on Painkillers and Other Drugs **SCOTT HENSLEY – WALL STREET JOURNAL**

This article represents some of the highest level of media attention given to Buprenorphine so far. It also points out some new statistics. About 1.4 million people were dependent on prescription pain relievers in 2003. Nearly 12 million people used the drugs for nonmedical reasons that year. Another 189,000 were dependent on heroin, by these estimates, with 314,000 users nationwide. As of July 2005, **Some 82% of people with commercial health insurance are covered for Buprenorphine.** About 5,800 doctors across the country have been cleared to prescribe the drug, but only **3,400** are listed in a government-run database (**59%**). Assistant professor of medicine Lynn E. Sullivan and colleagues at Yale University School of Medicine found that patients seeking office-based buprenorphine treatment were more likely to have jobs, have fewer years of addiction and be new to treatment than those going to a traditional methadone clinic. "These are the same patients that have always been in my office," says Dr. Sullivan, who is also an internist.

08/7/2005

Greater access to treatment hailed **PETER DEMARCO – THE BOSTON GLOBE**

The Boston area welcomes the change but feels it is still not enough. Colleen Labelle nurse-manager of Boston Medical Center's Office-Based Opioid Treatment Program, said she has had patients die while waiting for treatment. Waiting lists at some of the city's

largest hospitals are hundreds of names long. "We sent out letters to all physicians to say if you're not prescribing, tell us why," said Michael Botticelli, Assistant Commissioner for Substance Abuse Services at the State Department of Public Health. "I think there's a feeling among physicians that this population is not their current population. In some case, there's denial that there might be opioid-based addicts in their practice.

07/30/2005

More heroin addicts now treatable under new law **BONNIE ADAMS – TIMES LEADER**

And while the change is welcomed, some experts say the legislation doesn't go far enough. "There's such a need. So many people are not being served," said Dr. Lisa Costaris, director of the Choices Recovery Program methadone clinic. The National Alliance of Advocates for Buprenorphine Treatment (NAABT) supports removing the 30-patient limit for individual practitioners. Alliance President Tim Lepak said the nonprofit alliance based in Connecticut supports removing the limit for individual practice physicians. "It's health care rationing for no real reason," he said of the 30-patient limit. Lepak said the Alliance is developing a national database that will include a waiting list for opiate-dependent people in areas like eastern Pennsylvania. Physicians offering buprenorphine treatment will access the electronic waiting lists as early as Oct. 1 to find people needing treatment in their area. People will only be identified by numbers so that they will remain anonymous.

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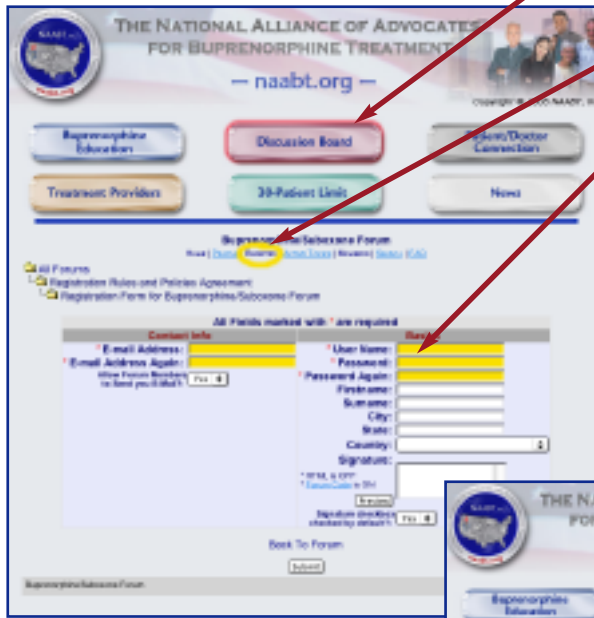
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REGISTRATION IS SECURE AND SIMPLE

The discussion board is now available for everyone. Anyone can register and participate in the discussions. Registration has been made simple. Some patients have found Suboxone discussion boards as useful as in-person meetings. The advantage of the board is that it is available 24/7 unlike meetings or counselors. Many patients prefer the anonymity of this form of discussion group (click "Discussion Board" on any page at naabt.org).

There is a section restricted to prescribers only, where questions to mentors can be asked. Physicians new to Suboxone treatment or physicians in rural areas now have a private and secure forum.

Also, the Patient/Doctor Connection page now includes a zip code search of the SAMHSA list. www.naabt.org



1. Click "Discussion Board" button on any page at naabt.org
2. Click "Register"
3. Fill in email address, user name and password – and optional fields you choose
4. For access to restricted Physician Discussion, please send an email to MakeContact@naabt.org

Select a topic and see what others have written



Post your own comments and/or questions.



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL ALCOHOL & DRUG ADDICTION RECOVERY MONTH



(An initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment)

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Alliance of Advocates for Buprenorphine Treatment is a non-profit organization formed to help people, in need of treatment, find treatment providers who are willing and able to treat opioid dependency in the privacy of a doctor's office. Our website offers answers to frequently asked questions, a glossary, actual patient experiences, a discussion board, information on the history and treatments of opioid addiction, current news on the subject and more.

This newsletter is provided to keep you informed on matters relating to Buprenorphine Treatment. Please feel free to contact us at newsletter@naabt.org with feedback, suggestions, or perhaps you would like to contribute a story. Also feel free to photocopy or print as many as these newsletters as you wish for distribution.

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