

**California Department of Health Care Services
Medication Assisted Treatment Expansion Project**

FACT SHEET

Issue Title: Medication Assisted Treatment Expansion Project. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is proposing to expand the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Expansion Project by requiring residential facilities and certified programs to provide access to MAT services, either by directly providing MAT services to clients or have an effective referral process with MAT providers, no sooner than July 1, 2022. This proposal would also allow narcotic treatment programs (NTP) to provide mobile MAT services.

Background: In California, overdose deaths have reached a historic high, totaling 9,617 deaths from August 2020 through July 2021. All opioid-related deaths, including by prescription, heroin, and fentanyl, made up 65 percent of the lives lost, and fentanyl was a factor in more than 50 percent of all drug-related overdose deaths. The California substance use disorder (SUD) system cannot adequately respond to the ongoing and increasing demands the ever-shifting opioid epidemic is placing on prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery services. Several years ago, the federal government began providing time-limited federal funding for states to utilize for prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery services in response to the opioid epidemic. California has received federal funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) through the State Opioid Response (SOR) grants.

MAT is treatment for a substance use disorder that includes the use of United States Food and Drug Administration approved medications along with counseling and other support. MAT services provided under this proposal may include transportation to MAT providers, identifying an evidence-based assessment for determining a client's MAT needs and training for staff about the benefits and risks of MAT.

Justification for Change: Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the substantial increase of fentanyl related opioid overdoses, increased access to services through the MAT Expansion Project is critical for Californians. DHCS proposes to expand the continuation of the MAT Expansion Project by requiring SUD residential facilities and certified programs to provide access to MAT services. DHCS also proposes to conform state law to federal regulations to allow NTPs to provide mobile methadone/MAT services.

MAT Services within State-Licensed Facilities and Certified Programs

DHCS is proposing to require all SUD licensed facilities and certified programs to either provide MAT services onsite or make effective referrals to MAT providers. Specifically, all SUD licensed facilities and certified programs would be required to implement and maintain a MAT policy, approved by DHCS, which would include the following:

- How a client receives information about the benefits and risks of MAT;
- The availability of MAT at the program, if applicable, and/or the referral process for MAT;

- Identify an evidence-based assessment for determining a client's MAT needs;
- Address administration, storage and disposal of MAT, if applicable; and
- Outline training for staff about its MAT policy as well as the benefits and risks of MAT

NTP Mobile MAT Services

On June 28, 2021, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) published a [final rule](#) that allows DEA-registered Opioid Treatment Programs (NTPs in California) to establish and operate components to dispense narcotic drugs in schedules I-V—such as mobile methadone vans—without obtaining a separate DEA registration for each mobile component. While federal guidance now allows mobile methadone, DHCS proposes to make statutory changes to state law to conform to federal regulations.

Summary Argument in Support:

- The proposal will effectively assist in addressing the opioid epidemic.
- The proposal will increase access to and the number of individuals receiving MAT in the SUD treatment system.

BCP # and Title: 4260-175-BCP-2022-GB. Medication Assisted Treatment Expansion Project