

Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project

March – September 2014

The intent of the Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project is to develop a shared understanding among stakeholders about the impact of opiate¹ addiction on Ohio's child welfare system. The end result will be development of a planning process for community systems to effectively intervene with opiate-addicted parents to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children.

Goals

To identify best practice standards that will use the accountability of family dependency courts, the oversight of child welfare agencies and local treatment assets to:

- 1) improve the treatment outcomes for opiate-addicted parents, and
- 2) decrease the number of children who are removed from parental custody.

Ad Hoc Committee

The Public Children's Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO), the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) and the Governor's Cabinet Opiate Action Team (GCOAT) have agreed to convene an ad hoc stakeholder planning process that will prepare a position paper and make recommendations addressing the following issues:

- I. The nature of opiate addiction,
- II. The scope of opiate addiction in the child welfare system,
- III. The financial and clinical impact of opiate addiction on Ohio children and families,
- IV. Policy recommendations regarding the use of treatment (including MAT), judicial intervention and child welfare oversight.

The following stakeholders have been identified as members of the ad hoc stakeholder group:

The Public Children's Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO), the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA), The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Service Providers, Ohio Association of Recovery Providers, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (JFS), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS), Ohio Department of Medicaid, Ohio Attorney General - Office of Children's Initiatives, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Supreme Court, and the Ohio Hospital Association.

¹ "Opiate" is used, and will be used consistently for the purposes of this ad hoc committee, to include both illicit opiate drugs (i.e. heroin) and prescription opioids.