

**Buncombe County Board Resolution on Medication Assisted Treatment  
Scheduled for August 20, 2019 Board Agenda**

RESOLUTION # \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION ENDORSING MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDERS

-----

- WHEREAS, The United States opioid epidemic is a public health emergency with devastating consequences, including opioid misuse, addiction, community crime, transmission of communicable diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis C, and overdose deaths.
- WHEREAS, In North Carolina, people are more likely to die of an overdose than a car crash. Overdoses are the leading cause of death for North Carolinians under age 50. In 2017, more than 6 people died each day in North Carolina from unintentional medication or drug overdoses;
- WHEREAS, The opioid crisis has been particularly severe in Western North Carolina, with tragic impacts on people and families in Buncombe County. While our community has made significant strides, we still have much work to do;
- WHEREAS, Fewer prescription opioids are being prescribed in Buncombe County (down from more than 17 million in 2016 to fewer than 14 million in 2017), however, overdoses are still on the rise. From 2015 – 2017, 163 people died in Buncombe County from unintentional opioid poisoning, according to state level data, with deaths nearly tripling from 2015 to 2017 (1) and emergency department visits up 30% from 2018 to 2019);
- WHEREAS, Buncombe County has established a strategic priority to stem the disease of opioid addiction through actions such as increasing public awareness and prevention, limiting the supply through industry and law enforcement action, and increasing access to treatment and harm reduction services;
- WHEREAS, Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) is a standard of care treatment modality, which combines behavioral therapy and medications as an evidence-based best practice to effectively treat opioid use disorder, reduce the risk of overdoses, reduce occurrences of relapse, and reduce the transmission of communicable diseases.
- WHEREAS, Formally-incarcerated persons have been identified to have 40 times the risk for overdose;
- WHEREAS, Detention facilities are on the front lines of this epidemic, and they also are in a unique position to initiate treatment in a controlled, safe environment and to help people access a continuum of care, including mental health support and safe housing, as they re-enter our community;
- WHEREAS, The Buncombe County Detention Center has a limited-scope MAT program, currently

---

1. NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch. "Unintentional Opioid Poisoning Deaths by County: N.C. Residents, 2008 – 2017" <https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/poisoning/DEATH-3-UnintentionalOpioidPoisoningsbyCounty-2008-2017.pdf>

**Buncombe County Board Resolution on Medication Assisted Treatment  
Scheduled for August 20, 2019 Board Agenda**

serving pregnant women; and

WHEREAS, The Buncombe County Sherriff's Office is developing a model for expanding access to MAT for opioid use disorder in the Detention Center.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That, as part of our strategic priority of responding to the opioid crisis, this Board endorses MAT as a strategy for responding to opioid crisis and supports the Buncombe County Sheriff's Office expansion of the detention-based MAT program to provide increased access to effective, evidence-based treatment.
2. That this Board supports a program structure that features a continuum of care, including screening, treatment, recovery education, case management, coordination with community-based providers, quality assurance, and sustainability.
3. That this Board believes initiatives such as this are most impactful when they are collaborative and thus supports working actively with state and local partners in expanding the MAT program, including through the use of State Opioid Response funds that will be used to pilot this initiative at the Buncombe County Sheriff's Office.
4. That this resolution be effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this the 20<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2019.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE  
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

\_\_\_\_\_

Lamar Joyner, Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Brownie Newman, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

\_\_\_\_\_

County Attorney