



NYSAC
NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

2018

Budget Priority

OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

PROBLEM

In recent years, New York State has seen rapid expansion of community-based treatment and support services for individuals and families struggling with substance use disorders. However, there remains a significant gap in the continuum of treatment and support available in local jails.

The link between criminal activity and substance use disorders (SUDs) is well established, bringing significant numbers of individuals suffering from addiction into our jails. Alcohol and drugs are implicated in roughly 80 percent of offenses, including domestic violence, DWIs, property offenses, drug offenses, and public order offenses. According to a recent report conducted on behalf of the NYS Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors, 68 percent of the individuals detained in county jails on drug-related charges had been there before. Jail incarceration provides a unique opportunity to offer treatment support during periods when people are clean and sober.

2018 EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

The Executive Budget proposal includes an increase of \$26 million (4.5 percent) in operating and capital support for the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) to enhance prevention, treatment and recovery programs, residential service opportunities, and public awareness and education. Over \$200 million in funding is being used to address the heroin and opioid crisis.

The Executive Budget proposal also includes language to create an opioid epidemic surcharge on opioid sales to dis-incentivize the use of opioids by placing the share of societal costs from opioid use on the manufacturers, producers, and distributors who financially gain from the use of these drugs.

The budget would also establish an opioid prevention, treatment and recovery account in the custody of the state comptroller. Revenue generated from the surcharge and revenue from litigation or enforcement actions against opioid pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers would be directed to this account to fund opioid treatment, recovery, and prevention services.

COUNTY SOLUTION

Counties bear the sole burden for supporting substance use disorder services in jails, and it is an ever-increasing burden with substantial unmet need. In our state, 51 percent of jails have no funding for substance use disorder treatment services, despite strong evidence that these services reduce crime, save money, and save lives. Fifty-three percent of jails do not have the capacity to directly transition addicted inmates to community treatment programs upon re-entry.

Counties request funding of \$12.8 million annually to the county mental health local government units to address the gap in the substance use disorder treatment continuum and to support efforts to reduce the human cost of the heroin/opioid epidemic on New Yorkers.

For more information on the county position regarding this issue, visit www.nysac.org or call 518-465-1473 to speak to Katie Hohman, NYSAC Legislative Director.