



Association for Behavioral
Health and Wellness

*Advancing benefits and services
in mental health, substance use
and behavior change.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABHW Floats Recommendations to Senate Finance Committee in Effort to Combat Opioid Epidemic

Washington, DC (February 16, 2018) – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 175 million people, today submitted recommendations to improve access and quality of treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD) to the U.S. Senate Finance Committee.

The Committee seeks to address root causes that lead to, or fail to, prevent OUD and other substance use disorders (SUD).

ABHW recommendations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 42 CFR Part 2 (Part 2), the outdated 1970s federal regulations governing the confidentiality of drug and alcohol treatment, should be modernized to allow the sharing of pertinent information with health care providers on the front line caring for patients suffering from opioid and other substance use disorders. ABHW members say Part 2 is one of the biggest – if not the biggest – barriers to fighting the opioid crisis.
- Health plans should have access to prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) data so they can have a more complete picture of the use of controlled substances in the community. If allowed access, these entities could identify patients at risk of overdose or complications and become a strategic partner in preventing and identifying misuse.
- Medicare coverage of a broad array of evidence-based treatments for OUD. Although Medicare does cover methadone for the treatment of pain, it does not cover methadone for the treatment of OUD. This policy should be changed so that persons being treated for an OUD have options for the most appropriate treatment.

Read ABHW full recommendations [here](#).

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[ABHW](#) is the leading health plan association working to improve access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW's members include national and regional health plans who care for more than 175 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care. Member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, Anthem, Beacon Health Options, Centene Corporation, Cigna, New Directions Behavioral Health, Optum, and PerformCare.