



Advancing Health Care Policy
for Mental Health and Addiction

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ABHW Comments on DEA's Interim Final Rule on SUPPORT Act
Dispensing and Administering Controlled Substances for MAT

Washington, DC (January 4, 2021) – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 200 million people, today commented on the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) interim final rule with comment period on the Implementation of the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act of 2018 (SUPPORT Act): Dispensing and Administering Controlled Substances for Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT).

ABHW members are dedicated to curbing the opioid epidemic and support a continuum of evidence-based, person-centered care to treat individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs). We strongly support the provisions the DEA has included in the interim final rule which will expand the size of the SUD services workforce and treatment and recovery infrastructure.

While this is a step in the right direction, ABHW urges the DEA to address the burdens of the in-person evaluation required by the Ryan Haight Act, as directed by the SUPPORT Act. We believe that the initial in-person requirement can easily be fulfilled by a virtual visit. Permanently eliminating this requirement will enable providers to prescribe MAT to patients with SUDs through a virtual visit by employing telemedicine. This ultimately will provide greater access and better patient care.

Full comments can be found [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 200 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care. Member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, Anthem/Beacon, Centene Corporation, Cigna, Kaiser Permanente, Magellan Health, New Directions Behavioral Health, and Optum.