

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **JOINT STATEMENT FROM LEADERS OF THE NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROVIDERS (ASAP) AND THE COALITION OF MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT PROVIDERS AND ADVOCATES OF NEW YORK STATE (COMPA) ON NEW OPIOID CRISIS LAW**

ALBANY -- March 1, 2020 – John Coppola, Executive Director of the New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers, and Allegra Schorr, President of the Coalition of Medication Assisted Treatment Providers and Advocates of New York State, today released the following statement regarding A-2904/S-4808, which takes effect today.

**Background:** The new law mandates coverage by commercial insurance for all FDA approved medications that are used to treat opioid use disorders – the gold standard of addiction care - and removes an unnecessary barrier to treatment, prior authorizations, before patients can access their medication. Governor Cuomo vetoed companion legislation (S5935A Harckham/ A7246B) which would have instituted these same standards for patients on Medicaid, codifying in state law a two-tiered system of addiction treatment, whereby access is now more restrictive for the most vulnerable population, New York's poor.

**Attributable to ASAP Executive Director John Coppola and COMPA President Allegra Schorr:**

“The state has adopted the correct response to the opioid crisis for people with private insurance. They have removed a major barrier to treatment. People who are covered by Medicaid should have the same opportunity to get the medication they need.

“Today, new rules take effect requiring private insurance companies to remove prior authorizations and expand coverage to include all medicines used to treat substance use disorders. Our hope is that the Governor will work out an agreement with the legislature that gives the same benefit to people covered by Medicaid. Only when this is accomplished will New York be able to say it is delivering health care services that increasingly match the magnitude of the unprecedented crisis of overdose and addiction.

“A recent study found that this policy, when applied to the Medicaid population, would save more than \$50 million and 600 lives annually. In the midst of a multi-billion-dollar budget hole – and a crisis of overdose and addiction - this policy is vital.”

**About ASAP:** The New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Professionals (ASAP) supports organizations, groups and individuals that prevent and alleviate the profound personal, social and economic consequences of substance use disorders in New York State. ASAP represents the interests of the largest substance use disorders prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction service delivery system in the country.

**About COMPA:** The Coalition of Medication-Assisted Treatment Providers and Advocates of New York State (COMPA) is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to treating addiction through the use of pharmacotherapy as a part of a comprehensive bio-psycho-social approach to treatment. COMPA-member programs, numbering more than 45 organizations across New York State, treat more than 41,000 New Yorkers from every corner of New York State and help them to overcome their dependence on illicit opioids and other drugs. COMPA, along with its member treatment programs, affiliate members, and corporate members works to improve all aspects of the lives of patients. This involves advocacy with federal, state, and local governments as well as a variety of educational activities. COMPA's program members provide Medication Assisted Treatment and include both Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) and Office-Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) providers. COMPA is the New York State member program of the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD). Visit [www.compa-ny.org](http://www.compa-ny.org). Facebook: @companync; Twitter: @COMPA\_New\_York