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STOP **STIGMA** NOW



**MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT  
FOR OPIOID ADDICTION SAVES LIVES**

[www.stopstigmanow.org](http://www.stopstigmanow.org)

# AMERICA IS EXPERIENCING AN OPIOID CRISIS OF EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS

## ***THE FACTS:***

- ... over 65,000 opiate overdose deaths in the past year (a 20% increase over the previous year.)
- ... the leading cause of deaths among Americans under the age of 50.
- ... America has the highest drug death rate in the world ... and increasing yearly.

The reality is that we are now facing the worst health crisis this country has ever experienced. It is imperative that we employ treatment strategies to reduce this opioid overdose epidemic that are aggressive and effective.

While many treatments for substance use disorder exist, opioid addiction has been traditionally difficult to treat. The relapse rate for opioid addiction is over 80%. Unfortunately, the most effective treatment has been misunderstood and criticized as substituting one addiction for another. This attitude has become a barrier to the precise treatment that has been scientifically proven to be life saving. Medications like methadone & buprenorphine block the craving for opioids and suppress opioid withdrawal thus enabling the addict to return to a normal life.

The most successful approach to date has been medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction.

# REVERSE THE NEGATIVE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR OPIOID ADDICTION

The stigma against methadone has existed since 1965 when its use as a medication to fight heroin addiction was first successfully pioneered by Drs. Vincent Dole, Marie Nyswander and Mary Jeanne Kreek at The Rockefeller University.

Since then, derogatory and misleading beliefs have been perpetuated by ignorance about addiction in medical and graduate schools, the legal profession, the criminal justice system, and among journalists, politicians, policy makers and society in general. While progress may be made during one generation, it is often forgotten as new people within those institutions again foster and perpetuate stigma.

STOP STIGMA NOW has developed a portfolio of articles and responses for distribution to professionals, the media and the general public to correct these misconceptions. Our mission is to inform them of the overwhelming scientific evidence supporting medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction, and ultimately to stop the stigma directed at both the treatment and the patients.

**W**e who have worked in the methadone field and know how effectively the disease of opioid addiction can be treated with medication, have a responsibility to those addicted to opioids who seek treatment, to remove any public stigma that hampers that treatment.

**JOIN US. Work with SSN. Contribute what you can.**

Founded in 2007 by a group of retired professionals with many years of experience in the field of substance abuse, STOP STIGMA NOW (SSN) has been working to end the stigma that has hampered medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction for much too long.

Our goal is to educate and inform the general public, the court systems, medical, nursing and counseling professions and the media about the overwhelming scientific evidence supporting the success of medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction.

To this end we aggressively and publicly confront unfounded, erroneous information regarding medically assisted addiction treatment whenever it appears in newspapers, magazines or professional journals.

By providing pertinent educational resources and information to government representatives, public officials, law enforcement agencies, health and human service organizations and the community-at-large we intend to counteract and ultimately eradicate the stigma associated with medication assisted treatment for opiate addiction.

Stop Stigma Now is an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization.  
All donations are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.



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