

About the Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine (WISAM)

The Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine (WISAM) represents over 150 physicians and clinicians in the state who specialize in the treatment of substance use disorders (SUD) and addiction, as well as providers with a strong interest in learning about and advancing the addiction medicine field. WISAM is a state chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the nation's oldest and largest medical specialty organization representing more than 5,500 physicians and clinicians with this specialty. WISAM and ASAM are dedicated to increasing access to and improving the quality of addiction treatment; education regarding the disease of addiction; supporting research and prevention; and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. Since 2019, WISAM has trained over 900 providers through the Buprenorphine X-Waiver Training Series. This series has been modified with the removal of the waiver requirement and the addition of the DEA renewal requirement of 8 hours of training related to SUD treatment. These trainings are designed to increase treatment capacity for opioid use disorders by training more prescribers to feel comfortable when prescribing buprenorphine. WISAM also hosts the monthly Open Exchange: free virtual meetings, open to all Wisconsin clinicians, both members and non-members, on the fourth Monday of the month (7:00-8:00 p.m.); please email wisam@badgerbay.co to be added to the mailing list about this event. WISAM will also host its Annual Conference on September 26-27, 2024, at the Oshkosh Waterfront Hotel & Convention Center in Oshkosh, WI.

What is an Addiction Medicine Specialist?

An Addiction Medicine Specialist is a physician concerned with the prevention, evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and recovery of persons with the disease of addiction, of those with substance-related health conditions, and of people who show unhealthy use of substances including nicotine, alcohol, prescription medications, and other licit and illicit drugs. Physicians in this subspecialty also help family members whose health and functioning are affected by a loved one's substance use or addiction. In March 2016, the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) recognized addiction medicine as a new subspecialty under the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM), which administers the board exam.

WISAM and ASAM Legislative Response to the Overdose Epidemic

As the nation and Wisconsin continue to see unprecedented numbers of lives being lost to drug overdose, WISAM and ASAM want to ensure patients in the state can access and receive high-quality, evidence-based, and comprehensive addiction treatment, recovery and harm reduction services. We ask the Wisconsin state legislature to consider the following priorities:

- **Prevention:**
 - Ensure that unregulated and addictive substances like kratom are not allowed to be sold in the state.
 - The decriminalization of cannabis to reduce historical social inequities are fully supported; legalization of cannabis for medical indications should only be allowed for conditions with sufficient evidence to support its use for that condition.
 - Support the promotion and funding of prescriber education in the areas of opioid prescribing and screening, brief intervention, referral and treatment of addiction.
 - Amend or repeal Act 292 which negatively impacts care of many pregnant people and often leads to pregnant people with substance use disorders not receiving prenatal care, out of fear of punitive responses.
- **Treatment:**
 - Promote state legislation that codifies and enforces the federal parity law at the state level, as well as support and equip insurance commissioners to undertake market conduct exams and plan audits.
 - Support increased funding and implementation of Addiction Medicine and Psychiatry Fellowship programs to help reduce the treatment gap in our state.
 - Advocate, fund and/or legislate that all individuals incarcerated in Wisconsin prisons and jails, on probation or parole, and those engaged in drug courts have access to medications for opioid use disorder- which has been shown to reduce risk of death at time of release, increase linkage to community-based care, and reduce recidivism.
- **Harm Reduction/Criminal Justice Reform:**
 - Advocate for further expansion of syringe service programs-particularly in rural parts of the state.
 - WISAM supports proposed legislation (SB 595 and AB 634) to update the 911 Good Samaritan Law, portions of which were allowed to sunset during the summer of 2020.
 - WISAM supports legislation that decriminalizes drug checking materials, including but not limited to fentanyl and xylazine test strips.