



Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania sees drug and alcohol program expansion through an increased supply of treatment options

The national opioid epidemic continues to get worse, and across Pennsylvania, residents of all ages and economic levels are increasingly seeing friends, colleagues and family members confronted with substance use disorders. Too frequently, these situations are spiraling out of control and we have seen a significant increase of overdose deaths. This is a serious problem.

For almost a decade now, Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania (Magellan) has continued to increase access to treatment options for members through its comprehensive network of providers. During this time, Magellan has studied and promoted the benefits of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) as an innovative solution for those experiencing substance use disorder. MAT, in combination with behavioral therapy, is an evidence-based intervention that numerous studies have shown to be effective in augmenting the treatment of alcohol, opioid, and tobacco use disorders. MAT is an option during both inpatient and outpatient treatment and can be incorporated into a broader disease-management program for individuals undergoing long-term care.

Magellan's MAT program is available for Magellan members with alcohol or opioid use disorders. A prominent component of our ongoing MAT initiative is to improve access to substance use treatment. According to Rajiv Vyas, MD, medical director for Magellan in Pennsylvania, "In 2015-2016, we increased our methadone maintenance capacity for MAT to 6,345 members. Moving forward, we will continue our efforts to expand access of substance use treatment for our members."

Another key focus of the drug and alcohol program expansion for Magellan over the past two years has been an increase in bed access. Magellan had an increase of more than 100 available rehab beds across its network during 2015-2016. During this same time-period, Magellan also had an increase of more than 40 available detox beds across its network.