

## Talking Points on Act 75, 2013, Section 15a

### Act 75, 2013

Supports the establishment of a comprehensive approach to combatting opioid addiction and methamphetamine abuse in Vermont through strategies that address prevention, treatment, and recovery.

### Section 15a

Section 15a plans for strengthening the treatment and recovery services to respond to opioid addiction and methamphetamine abuse to ensure that the service system that has the capacity to respond to increases in opioid dependence and addiction.

### Key Issues and Recommendations

Staffing Capacity: the most significant challenge is reaching an adequate statewide capacity of professionals trained in addiction treatment.

- A statewide workgroup is charged with implementing a strategic plan for ensuring adequate healthcare workforce capacity as part of health reform.

Waitlists: growing demand for treatment services has resulted in sizable waitlists.

- Work is underway to create more uniform waitlist reporting protocols across the substance abuse treatment system.
- The hub and spoke system continues to reduce backlogs across the system.

Payment Reform: not all payers cover hub services.

- The Department of Health is submitting a proposal to the Green Mountain Care Board for a payment reform pilot with private insurers to cover Hub and Spoke services.

### Need for Further Enhancements:

- Transfer clients to new or expanded hubs to reduce Medicaid transportation costs
- Provide training and incentives for spoke physicians to increase buprenorphine treatment capacity
- Explore Bennington, Franklin/Grand Isle Hub
- Establish a mechanism for delivery of methadone by hub and spoke physicians
- Investigate use of a generic tablet form buprenorphine for uninsured clients in hubs
- Explore ways to intervene earlier -- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT); expansion of outpatient treatment capacity; the number of Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADCs) allowed to bill Medicaid
- Explore the introduction of *hublets*