

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall provide coverage to Medicaid beneficiaries for medically necessary medication for opioid use disorder when prescribed by a health care professional practicing within the scope of the professional's license and participating in the Medicaid program.

(b) Pending approval of the Drug Utilization Review Board, the Agency shall cover at least one medication in each therapeutic class for methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone as listed on Medicaid's preferred drug list without requiring prior authorization.

Sec. 8. PRIOR AUTHORIZATION; MEDICATION FOR OPIOID USE  
DISORDER; COMMUNITY REENTRY

On or before November 1, 2023, the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee shall provide recommendations to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare regarding any legislative action needed to ensure continuity of treatment for individuals reentering the community after discharge from a correctional setting, including eliminating prior authorization for medication for opioid use disorder.

Sec. 8a. REPORT; PRIOR AUTHORIZATION; SUBSTANCE USE  
DISORDER TREATMENT

The Department of Vermont Health Access shall research, in consultation with individuals representing diverse professional perspectives, the feasibility and costs of administering a gold card program for substance use disorder treatment in which the Agency of Human Services shall not require a

health care provider to obtain prior authorization for substance use disorder treatment if, in the most recent six-month evaluation period, the Agency has approved or would have approved not less than 90 percent of the prior authorization requests submitted by the health care provider for the medication. On or before December 1, 2023, the Department's research shall be submitted to the Drug Utilization Review Board and Clinical Utilization Review Board for review, consideration, and the provision recommendations. On or before April 1, 2024, the Drug Utilization Review Board and Clinical Utilization Review Board shall each submit their recommendations to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

Sec. 8b. RULEMAKING; PRIOR AUTHORIZATION; BUPRENORPHINE

The Department of Vermont Health Access shall amend its rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to enable health care providers in office-based opioid-treatment programs to prescribe 24 milligrams or less of the preferred medication for buprenorphine without prior authorization in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 19011.

\* \* \* Recovery Residences \* \* \*

Sec. 9. 24 V.S.A. § 4412 is amended to read:

§ 4412. REQUIRED PROVISIONS AND PROHIBITED EFFECTS

Notwithstanding any existing bylaw, the following land development provisions shall apply in every municipality:

(1) Equal treatment of housing and required provisions for affordable housing.

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(G) A residential care home or group home to be operated under State licensing or registration, serving not more than eight persons who have a disability as defined in 9 V.S.A. § 4501, or a recovery residence serving not more than eight persons, shall be considered by right to constitute a permitted single-family residential use of property. This subdivision (G) does not require a municipality to allow a greater number of residential care homes or group homes on a lot than the number of single-family dwellings allowed on the lot. As used in this subdivision, “recovery residence” means a shared living residence supporting persons recovering from a substance use disorder that:

(i) Provides tenants with peer support and assistance accessing support services and community resources available to persons recovering from substance use disorders.

(ii) Is certified by an organization approved by the Department of Health and that is either a Vermont affiliate of the National Alliance for Recovery Residences or another approved organization or is pending such certification. If certification is pending beyond 45 days, the municipality shall retain its right to consider the residence pursuant to zoning bylaws adopted in compliance with 24 V.S.A. § 4411.

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