

LD604 - Info Sheet**"An Act to Ensure Access to Concurrent Methadone Treatment and Intensive Outpatient Programs"****Contact:**

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Committee Hearing:

Health And Human Services Committee

Mar 13 @ 1:00 pm in Cross Building, Room 209

Primary Legislative Sponsor:

Laura Supika (D - Bangor)

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Official Bill Summary:

This bill prohibits the Department of Health and Human Services from prohibiting coverage of or otherwise restricting coverage for individuals enrolled in the MaineCare program from receiving methadone maintenance for the treatment of opioid use disorder and from concurrently participating in medically appropriate intensive outpatient programs and other outpatient services intended for the treatment of substance use disorder or behavioral health disorders. It directs the department to adopt rules implementing these requirements no later than 90 days after the effective date of the rules.

Testimonials:

"After my son died, I turned back to heroin to deal with all the pain. At that time, I knew I didn't want to die, so I got onto methadone, which enabled me to stay well long enough in between highs to accomplish what I needed to do to keep my life afloat. Today, many years later, including many spent behind bars, I don't just want to avoid death, I actually want a life. Living in a recovery residence and attending an intensive outpatient program five days a week has been amazingly helpful for me in building a healthy life that I can genuinely feel proud of. It's awful for me to think that, if I were still on methadone, MaineCare wouldn't pay for me to be able to take advantage of this life-saving opportunity."

"I serve as the Housing Director for a 12-week recovery housing and intensive outpatient program (IOP) in Gorham. I'm also a person on methadone. Every week, I get calls from other methadone patients like me asking if they can come to our program and receive help in actually staying sober, and I have to turn them away because MaineCare won't pay for them to come here as long as they're on methadone, which it would be really dangerous for them to get off of. It's a terrible feeling. The truth is that the methadone clinics barely offer any clinical treatment at all, let alone the kind of intense clinical services that people often need to recover from the hell of addiction. I know intimately how hard it can be for people to take time out of their lives to recover their sobriety, their sanity, and their health, and I think if people want to take that time, they should be able to. I hate seeing people in early recovery who want help and don't get it."

"For me, there was no way I was ever going to get sober living where I was. I had to get away and start over in a new community where I could get solid support in my recovery and be away from my old bad influences. I found that escape to a better life at a recovery housing and intensive outpatient program about an hour away from where I was. If I'd been on methadone and not been able to get help in the way in which I did, I don't think I ever would have left my old community."