

## POSITION STATEMENT IN SUPPORT

### ***LD 1135: An Act Regarding Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services and Increasing Reimbursement Rates for Those Services***

Presented to Maine's Committee on Health and Human Services  
*Tuesday April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

NAMI-Maine writes in support of LD 1135. Maine experienced its deadliest year in the Opioid epidemic in 2020 when we lost 503 Mainers to overdose deaths. Since 2021 began we have lost 99 Mainers to overdose deaths.<sup>i</sup> It is time for Maine to begin enacting legislation to prevent these losses, as communities continue to experience loved ones taken by this mental illness.

Research demonstrates a strong link between exposure to traumatic events and substance use problems. Many people who have experienced child abuse, criminal attack, disasters, war, or other traumatic events turn to alcohol or drugs to help them deal with emotional pain, bad memories, poor sleep, guilt, shame, anxiety, or terror. People with alcohol or drug use problems are more likely to experience traumatic events than those without these problems. Many people find themselves in a vicious cycle in which exposure to traumatic events produces increased alcohol and drug use, which produces new traumatic event experiences, which leads to even worse substance use, and so forth. Just as traumatic events and substance use often occur together, so do trauma-related disorders and substance use disorders. For example, trauma-related disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, occur frequently among people with substance use disorders and vice versa. Not only do trauma-related and substance use disorders wreak havoc on the person who has them, they also often create major problems for relationships with family members and friends.<sup>ii</sup>

By requiring trauma informed care, we are ensuring that medical providers understand the complexity of the interaction between trauma and substance use disorder. This is yet another step in combating the devastating effect that substance use disorder is having on Maine.



**ABOUT NAMI MAINE:** *Incorporated in 1984, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maine Chapter (NAMI Maine) is the state's largest grassroots mental health organization. With support from national and regional affiliates, the agency is dedicated to building better lives for everyone impacted by behavioral health concerns. NAMI Maine engages with leaders and community partners at all levels to improve the state's mental health system through collaboration and education.*

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<sup>i</sup> [Researcher Landing Page – Maine Drug Data Hub](#)

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.istss.org/ISTSS\\_Main/media/Documents/ISTSSSubstancenormal.pdf](https://www.istss.org/ISTSS_Main/media/Documents/ISTSSSubstancenormal.pdf)

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