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May 16, 2013

Dear Colleague:

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) is seeking public comments on the revised 2007 SAMHSA *Guidelines for the Accreditation of Opioid Treatment Programs*. These guidelines elaborated upon the Federal opioid treatment standards set forth under 42 CFR Part 8.

SAMHSA's Final Rule published in the Federal Register on January 17, 2001, ("Final Rule" 66 FR 4075-4102, January 17, 2001) includes standards for opioid treatment programs (OTPs). OTPs are required to provide treatment in accordance with these standards as a basis for SAMHSA certification. These standards address patient admission, medical and counseling services, drug testing, and other requirements. The final rule also established an accreditation requirement. Each OTP is required to obtain and maintain accreditation from an accreditation organization approved by SAMHSA under 42 CFR Part 8. Accreditation organizations that provide OTP accreditation under the final rule are required to apply for and obtain SAMHSA approval. Under 42 CFR 8.3(a)(3), each accreditation organization must develop a set of accreditation elements or standards together with a detailed discussion of how these elements will assure that each OTP surveyed by the accreditation organization is meeting each for the Federal opioid treatment standards.

The Federal Guidelines for Opioid Treatment are intended to inform accreditation organizations in revising their accreditation standards. In addition, the Guidelines provide useful elaborations on the regulatory standards set forth under 42 CFR Part 8. As such, the updated guidelines will assist both accreditation organizations and OTPs in complying with regulatory requirements.

Prepared initially in 1997, SAMHSA's Guidelines for Opioid Treatment are being updated now to reflect new information and research in the field of opioid assisted treatment. CSAT convened an expert panel to provide the draft guideline now being circulated for comment. CSAT is soliciting comments on the guideline from the public, and expects comments from OTPs, accreditation organizations, patients, the medical community and other interested parties.

In order to publish a revised guideline, CSAT will consider all comments submitted by July 16, 2013. The draft guideline is accessible at www.dpt.samhsa.gov/regulations/accreditation.aspx. You may submit electronic comments to DPT@samhsa.hhs.gov. Written comments should be mailed to the following address ONLY: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Attention: DPT Federal Register Representative, Division of Pharmacologic Therapies, 1 Choke Cherry Road, Room 7-1044, Rockville, MD 20857. Please allow sufficient time for mailed comments to be received before the close of the comment period.

Sincerely,

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