

To: NASADAD / NPN / NTN Members
From: Robert Morrison, NASADAD Interim Executive Director
Cc: Flo Stein (N.C.), President
Date: January 21, 2009
RE: NASADAD Meets with Transition Officials

NASADAD Meets with Transition Officials

On January 13, Barbara Durkin, Public Policy Associate and Robert Morrison joined other members of the addiction prevention, treatment and recovery community to meet with members of President-elect Obama's transition team overseeing health and addiction issues. The meeting was designed to provide members of the transition team an overview of core priorities pertaining to addiction policy. Members of the transition team included, among others,

- Christopher Putala. Former Judiciary Committee staffer for Senator Joe Biden (D-DE). Main focus will be Office of National Drug Control Policy [ONDCP]),
- Dora Hughes, MD, MPH. Most recently, worked on health issues for then-Senator Barack Obama (D-IL). She also worked for Senator Kennedy (D-MA) on health issues,
- Evan Ryan, Office of Vice President Biden, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Liaison. Ms. Ryan served in the Clinton White House working for then-First Lady Hillary Clinton, and
- Karen Richardson, who served as then-Senator Obama's Deputy Policy Director and a lead policy advisor during the campaign.

NASADAD Policy Staff reviewed the important role of State substance abuse agencies and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant. Staff promoted the Association's partnership with SAMHSA to report outcomes data and embrace accountability.

In addition to noting the tough fiscal times States face, specific mention was made of recent negative trends (from 2004 to 2008) pertaining to federal funding for addiction programs, including:

- A \$20 million decrease in SAPT Block Grant funding,
- A decrease of 1.77 percent in funding for the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), and
- A decrease of 2.1 percent in funding for the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP).

NASADAD staff offered a special note regarding financing for prevention services – explaining the important role of the SAPT Block Grant's prevention set-aside; the fact that the set-aside can often represent the majority of prevention funding available for State substance abuse agencies; and echoed earlier comments regarding severe decreases in the Safe and Drug Free Schools State Grants program.

NASADAD also reminded the officials of the large percentage of criminal justice referrals in the publicly funded system (on average, 40 percent, according to SAMHSA) – with certain States seeing this number

at 60 percent or larger. Transition team members took specific note of this fact and seemed somewhat surprised at this data.

The coalition as a whole addressed a wide range of topics, including

- Financing issues
- Workforce issues
- Health care reform
- Discrimination
- The recovery community
- And more

Obama team members thanked the coalition for the hour-long briefing. NASADAD Staff provided the transition team with background materials and pledged to serve as a source of information as the Administration moves forward.

NASADAD is also working with transition team officials on sharing recommendations pertaining to criminal justice / addiction policy. We will provide additional information to the membership on additional meetings and outreach.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Robert Morrison, Interim Executive Director, at 202.293.0090 x106 or rmorrison@nasadad.org.