

Addiction Medicine: The Urgent Need for Trained Physicians

*A Congressional Briefing Sponsored by
The Addiction Medicine Foundation*

In cooperation with

**The Congressional Prescription Drug Abuse Caucus
The Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus
The Congressional Bipartisan Heroin Task Force**

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Rayburn House Office Building (Ground Floor Room 2045).

This briefing informed lawmakers and staff about the newly recognized medical field of Addiction Medicine, which will add qualified, credentialed expert physicians to the interdisciplinary workforce addressing America's unhealthy and deadly substance use problem. The potential for improving health, reducing taxpayer costs and addressing the current opioid epidemic was outlined as was the urgent need to build the addiction medicine workforce.

Substance misuse and addiction now constitute the Nation's largest and most costly health problem. Sixteen percent of Americans age 12 and over have addiction involving nicotine, alcohol, controlled prescription drugs and other drugs—more than those who have diabetes, cancer or heart conditions. Another 32 percent engage in substance use in ways that threaten health and safety. According to the most recent published estimate involving all substances, more than 20 percent of deaths in the U.S. (578,819) are caused by substance misuse and addiction and currently 91 Americans die of an opioid overdose every day. These conditions also contribute to more than 70 other conditions requiring medical care and to a wide range of social consequences, costing our nation more than \$700 billion each year. Despite the prevalence of these conditions, the enormity of the consequences that result from them and the availability of effective solutions, screening and early intervention for substance misuse is rare and 9 out of 10 people who meet criteria for addiction involving alcohol and drugs other than nicotine receive no treatment; information is not even collected on those receiving treatment for addiction involving nicotine. While the medical subspecialty of addiction psychiatry exists, it is only open to psychiatrists while the need for addiction specialists exists across all medical fields. Newly available expert credentialing in the field of addiction medicine is open to all physicians through the American Board of Preventive Medicine, and accredited addiction medicine fellowships are now available nationwide.

Speakers

Louis E. Baxter Sr., M.D., Co-Director, Howard University Addiction Medicine Fellowship Program; Director, The Addiction Medicine Foundation; Past President, American Society of Addiction Medicine

U.S. Representative Harold "Hal" Rogers (KY-05), Co-Chair, Congressional Prescription Drug Abuse Caucus

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., EVP, The Addiction Medicine Foundation

George F. Koob, Ph.D., Director, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, NIH

Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse, NIH

Mason S. Turner, M.D., Dir. of Outpatient Mental Health and Addiction Medicine, The Permanente Medical Group Inc.

Anna Lembke, M.D., Director, Stanford University Addiction Medicine Fellowship; President, Addiction Medicine Fellowship Directors Association