Family and juvenile justice system professionals have inadequate knowledge and training on medication-assisted treatment (MAT) as an effective, evidenced-based treatment for opioid use disorders (OUD); when they limit or prohibit adults or adolescents with OUD from accessing MAT, this adversely affects the ability of such individuals to achieve successful outcomes in the juvenile or family law related cases in which they are involved.

The Problem

Reduced use of illicit opioids.
Decreased mortality from opioid use disorder.
Increased retention in OUD behavioral health treatment services.
Increased abstinence from illicit opioid use.
Increased length of time between relapses.
Increased parental retention of the custody of their children.
Improved outcomes for babies with neonatal abstinence syndrome.
Increased length of time between relapses.

Barriers to Medication-Assisted Treatment

Prohibiting access to MAT by court orders or government agency regulations.
Restricting visitation of children in foster care by parents being treated with MAT.
Prohibiting access to MAT by court orders or government agency regulations.
Imposing sanctions on those using legally prescribed and monitored medication-assisted treatment.

The Solution

Judicial leadership on the court system being a referral source for medication-assisted treatment in combination with behavioral health services as evidence-based treatment for opioid use disorders.
Training and technical assistance to juvenile and family justice professionals on the use of FDA-approved medications to treat addiction to opioids.
Funding for additional research.
Collaboration with allied organizations and federal partners.
Recognition that ordering individuals to refrain from, decrease or stop using medication-assisted treatment as prescribed is discrimination and is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
Training and technical assistance to juvenile and family justice professionals on comprehensive services and evidence–based treatments, including MAT, for addressing opioid use disorders.

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