



AMERICA'S ESSENTIAL HOSPITALS

Nov. 1, 2024

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sens. Cantwell and Cassidy:

On behalf of our more than 300 members, America's Essential Hospitals is pleased to support S. 4430, the Fatal Overdose Reduction Act. We appreciate that this bipartisan legislation replicates a program at UW Medicine, our member in Seattle, that would create a low-barrier fentanyl treatment pilot program across the United States through Health Engagement Hubs. With this model, UW Medicine reduced fatal overdoses by 68 percent. Thank you for your dedicated response to this public health threat, which affects all communities nationwide.

America's Essential Hospitals is the leading association and champion for hospitals dedicated to equitable, high-quality care for all. Essential hospitals serve patients living on low incomes and others who face social and financial barriers to care; deliver complex, lifesaving services, such as level I trauma and neonatal intensive care; train physicians and other health care professionals; meet public and population health needs; and coordinate care across the continuum. They reach outside their walls to tackle social determinants of health, such as food insecurity, homelessness, and substance use disorders.

As economic anchors for their communities and trusted providers for all, essential hospitals see firsthand how opioid use disorder (OUD) affects individuals and their surrounding communities. Essential hospitals lead efforts to improve population health and develop innovative programs to prevent OUD in communities facing barriers to care. Evidence-based treatment programs, such as this low-barrier fentanyl treatment pilot program, that can exist within or outside a hospital system are a key component of OUD reduction efforts.

We recognize and applaud this legislation's goals of streamlining and simplifying high-quality care for substance use disorder patients. We believe this legislation is crucial to our members and the communities they serve. We thank each of you for your efforts to make care more efficient and impactful in our country.

Sincerely,

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH
President and CEO

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