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357 House Members, 111 Organizations and the Nation's Governors Support the Overdose Prevention and Patient Safety Act

357 Representatives, including Republican and Democratic Leaders and every physician member of the House, voted in June to ensure that patients who are suffering from substance use disorders receive the same high-quality, safe and coordinated care that patients with other conditions receive. The Overdose Prevention and Patient Safety Act (H.R. 6082) would help communities across the country address the opioid epidemic by modernizing a 40-year old law (42 CFR Part 2). That law is impeding healthcare providers' ability to diagnose, treat and prevent addiction and other opioid-related disorders. This is why more than [110 patient, healthcare provider, physician, addiction treatment, municipal and other organizations](#) have joined with the [nation's governors](#) and [state Medicaid directors](#) in calling for enactment of H.R. 6082. House and Senate leaders crafting a compromise opioids package should ensure this bill is incorporated in the final package.

H.R. 6082 would remove a major barrier to better and safer care management

- Part 2 requires information on substance use to be segmented from a patient's medical record and requires patients to provide multiple, complex consents for these records to be shared with healthcare providers. This prevents gaining a full picture of a patient's health and keeps providers from being able to deliver informed care.
- Unless Part 2 is amended, patients will continue to be at risk of overdoses, addiction relapses, adverse outcomes due to medical contraindications and missed opportunities for well-coordinated prevention and treatment services.
- The impact of other reforms to help first responders, encourage safe prescribing practices, expand medication assisted treatments and provide more funding will be limited if healthcare providers don't have the information they need to identify substance use issues.
- H.R. 6082 amends 42 CFR Part 2 to align with HIPAA's treatment, payment and operation protections. This allows sharing of medical records among providers for patients with addictions, just like we have done for every other disease and condition since 1996.

HR 6082 fortifies privacy protections and boosts penalties for misuse of patients' medical information and prevents discriminatory care

- Arguments that the bill would threaten individuals' privacy and lead to discrimination is simply not true. H.R. 6082 maintains stringent HIPAA confidentiality protections for substance use records and would apply additional compliance and enforcement opportunities to ensure patient information is protected.
- This contrasts with current confidentiality protections under Part 2, which have never been enforced. Instead, Part 2 perpetuates the very stigma that causes discrimination by creating a two-tiered system in which those struggling with addiction receive uncoordinated, incomplete care that can exacerbate their condition, lead to unnecessary emergency department visits and even result in overdose.
- The Overdose Prevention and Patient Safety Act puts in place even more robust privacy protections against misuse of medical information than is currently provided in the 1970s 42 CFR Part 2 law, including:
 - Antidiscrimination language;
 - Breach notification;
 - Protections against use of information in criminal prosecution and civil case proceedings;
 - Protections against sharing information with employers and landlords; and
 - Application of HIPAA penalties for violations, replacing current weak Part 2 penalties rarely enforced by the Department of Justice.
- H.R. 6082 will only allow for the legitimate sharing of health information for specific treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes and only with covered entities that are bound by HIPAA.

About the Premier healthcare alliance

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