

# U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



CHAIRMAN Special Committee on Aging

## **The Residential Recovery for Seniors Act**

*U.S. Senator Bob Casey and Reps. Lauren Underwood, Carol Miller, David Valadao, and Paul Tonko*

On December 14, 2023, Chairman Bob Casey convened a U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing entitled “*Understanding a Growing Crisis: Substance Use Trends Among Older Adults.*” At this hearing, witnesses and members discussed gaps in Medicare coverage for substance use disorders (SUDs).

SUDs are increasingly prevalent among older adults. For older Americans, factors like social isolation and increased exposure to psychoactive substances can contribute to the development of SUDs. Mortality from drug overdoses among people aged 65 and older more than tripled between 2000 and 2020. In 2022, approximately 1.7 million Medicare beneficiaries were estimated to have a SUD, which is about 8 percent of Medicare beneficiaries 65 and older and 2 percent of beneficiaries under 65.

### **Why do we need the Residential Recovery for Seniors Act?**

Medicare Parts A, B, and D each cover a portion of SUD services. The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) classifies four levels of care for addiction treatment based on patient needs. This continuum of care model demonstrates the different levels of care that are appropriate for different types of patients. Previously, traditional Medicare covered only the least intensive types of treatments on the continuum (Level 1), along with the most intensive treatment types (Level 4). Starting in January 2024, intensive outpatient services (Level 2) were also included in coverage to fill the gap in the middle levels of care.

While this is important progress, non-hospital-based residential SUD treatment (Level 3) is still not covered by Medicare.

### **What would the Residential Recovery for Seniors Act do?**

The bill would expand Medicare coverage for residential treatment options (Level 3) for older adults and people with disabilities by creating a new benefit under Medicare Part A.

- The bill would establish a new prospective payment system based on the needed level of care.

Beneficiaries’ initial and continued needs would be assessed, based on evidence-based SUD-specific criteria developed by a nonprofit medical association.

**Endorsers:** American Society of Addiction Medicine, Legal Action Center, Illinois Association for Behavioral Health, SMART Recovery, Mental Health America, National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine, HIV Alliance, A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing), American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, National Association of Behavioral Health, Treatment Communities of America,