

AMERSA Advocacy Committee 2024 Annual Report

The AMERSA Advocacy Committee made significant strides in 2024, advancing advocacy efforts for substance use disorder (SUD) support and reform. The year began with setting a strategic direction, establishing bimonthly meetings, and launching two focus subcommittees—one on methadone reform and the other on harm reduction and drug decriminalization. Advocacy Committee, through their subcommittees, published four new [position statements](#), including advocacy to support expanding access to methadone treatment, overdose prevention centers, community drug checking programs, and the decriminalization of drug equipment use and possession. The Committee also worked with the AMERSA Board of Directors to develop a new position statement approval process to streamline efforts. In addition, the Advocacy Committee sought to support AMERSA membership's skills in advocacy, including organizing two educational webinars focused on 1) applying the Americans with Disabilities Act to advocate for people with substance use disorders and 2) preparing expert testimony for state-level advocacy. The Committee also organized "Advocacy Office Hours" to facilitate collaboration with members on advocacy writing, and also collaborated with like minded organizations to support several sign on requests.

In responding to feedback from the membership survey, the Advocacy Committee will focus its future strategic directions on expanding its educational opportunities, through a future Hill Day, building its membership in diverse geographic areas, and incorporating advocacy into organizational branding and website materials. These initiatives align with AMERSA's strategic goal of becoming the primary advocacy home for a multidisciplinary audience and will create a strong foundation for ongoing advocacy and impact in the SUD field.