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April 27, 2020

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Dear Special Masters Cohen and Yanni, and Members of the Settlement Groups for the MDL *In re: National Prescription Opiate Litigation and Clients*,

We are writing on behalf of health care professionals who are at the front lines of treating patients who suffer from opioid use disorder and co-occurring mental illnesses. As you work out the legal issues, it is important that you understand the medical issues and limitations confronting this patient population who have been so severely impacted by our nation's opioid use disorder epidemic.

While opioid addiction is complex, it is treatable and preventable – but not with current limitations on the workforce trained in the treatment of substance use disorders, limited access to quality care, and discriminatory insurance coverage for mental health and substance use disorders. Should there be a settlement of the legal cases, we respectfully request that funds be used to (1) expand the workforce qualified to prevent and treat substance use and mental health disorders; (2) disseminate trainings and education regarding evidence based treatments to increase adoption of clinical best practices; and (3) enforce mental health and addiction parity and consumer protection statutes in states.

The attached White Paper explains the problems our members see in accessing quality care for mental health and addictions treatment and provides some suggestions on how these obstacles might be overcome. We trust that this will be the beginning of a dialogue among our organizations and the litigants which will ultimately benefit patients suffering from mental health and substance use disorders.

On behalf of those on the front line dealing with this crisis, we thank you for your interest in finding solutions to the opioid use disorder epidemic and your willingness to listen. We look forward to working with you toward a system that provides access to the medical care needed to prevent and treat addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders.

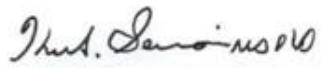
We are ready to work with you on finding solutions to the opioid use disorder epidemic and lack of access to high-quality care.

If you have any questions or need additional information, kindly contact Colleen Coyle at ccoyle@psych.org or 571-319-3024.

Sincerely,



Saul Levin, MD, MPA, FRCP-E
CEO and Medical Director
American Psychiatric Association



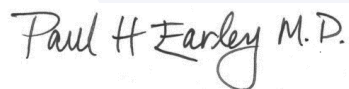
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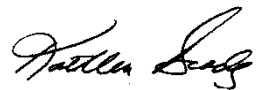


Paula Lum MD

Paula J. Lum, MD, MPH

President

Association for Multidisciplinary Education and Research in Substance use and Addiction



Kathleen Brady

Kathleen T. Brady, MD, PhD

President

International Society of Addiction Medicine

cc: Honorable Dan Aaron Polster,
United States District Court Judge