



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**11/1/17**

**CONTACT: LAURI COLE**  
**(518) 461-8200**

### **NYS Council Responds to President's Opioid Commission Report**

**ALBANY, NY** – The New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare (NYS Council) appreciates the serious consideration the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis has given to addressing the heroin and opioid crisis in their report released today, but **without significant funding support the recommended proposals will fall far short of their promise to end this national epidemic.** Providers and other stakeholders across New York State must have access to new funding to provide enhanced prevention, treatment and recovery services that are the cornerstone to addressing the opioid crisis.

The Commission's report details a number of recommendations that the NYS Council supports and would encourage to be implemented, including proposals to expand use of telemedicine in treating substance use disorders, and removing policy and reimbursement barriers to accessing treatment and medication-assisted therapies. These recommendations would indeed make an impact in the fight against the opioid epidemic, but they cannot be realized without investments.

"Policy recommendations, regulatory changes and shifting of existing funds alone will not put an end to the epidemic which continues to claim over 175 lives each day. Significant funding is critical and necessary to implementing solutions, tracking progress and sustaining lasting change," said NYS Council Executive Director Lauri Cole.

NYS Council Board President John Kastan said, "Our communities cannot wait any longer for meaningful action from our leaders to bring resources to bear to turn the tide of this devastating crisis that has not abated in years. Our elected officials must allocate significant funding across to ensure that well-intentioned recommendations are actually implemented and successful."

For many years the SUD prevention, treatment and recovery field fought for leaders to recognize the growing crisis of heroin and opioid related deaths they saw devastating communities across the country. Now that the scope of epidemic is finally being recognized at the highest levels of government, we must heed the cautions of those fighting on the ground everyday and ensure appropriate resources are allocated to put an end to the opioid epidemic.

---

The NYS Council is a statewide non-profit membership association representing the interests of 100 behavioral health (mental health and substance use) prevention, treatment and recovery organizations across New York.