



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2015 Wisconsin Act 263**  
[2015 Assembly Bill 659]

**Opioid Treatment Programs**

2015 Wisconsin Act 263 (the Act) makes several changes to the law regulating programs for opiate addiction that utilize narcotic drugs for treatment or detoxification. These programs are referred to as narcotic treatment services, and are regulated by federal law and by administrative rules of the Department of Health Services (DHS).

### CERTIFICATION PERIOD

Under current law, narcotic treatment services must be certified by the federal government and DHS. The federal certification is valid for a three-year period. The Act requires DHS to modify the state certification period to coincide with the federal certification period. Under prior DHS rules, DHS certification was valid for two years.

### COUNSELING SERVICES

The Act requires DHS to allow a narcotic treatment service to contract for substance abuse counselors, clinical substance abuse counselors, or an agency to provide counseling services in lieu of directly hiring those individuals. Under prior DHS rules, a narcotic treatment service was required to directly employ all counselors.

### DURATION OF TREATMENT

The Act prohibits DHS from limiting the length of treatment an individual receives from a narcotic treatment service. DHS rules do not place a limit on the duration of treatment, but require a service to make a concerted effort to retain patients within the first year following admission.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

**LOCATION OF TREATMENT PROVIDER**

The Act prohibits DHS from requiring an individual who seeks admission to a narcotic treatment service for opiate addiction to reside within a certain radius of that treatment service. Prior DHS rules required an individual to receive treatment at a service located in the same county or at the nearest location to the person's residence. DHS rules allowed for an exception if a service was unavailable within a radius of 50 miles from the individual's residence.

**MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REIMBURSEMENT FOR TREATMENT**

Nothing in the Act affects whether treatment is reimbursable under the Medical Assistance program.

*Effective date:* March 19, 2016

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March 22, 2016

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