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Should State and Local Governments Use Pay for Success Financing to Support Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for Opioid-Use Disorder?

The increasing rate of opioid use disorder and overdose deaths has become a national opioid crisis, which has further increased pressure for policy-makers to “just do something.” However, the opioid crisis is complicated, and it isn’t always clear how state and local governments can improve the situations people are facing.

Pay for Success (PFS) is an innovative financing model that allows state and local governments to ensure their scarce resources are used for programs that actually improve people’s lives. As one of the only evidence-based solutions available to help address the opioid crisis, implementing Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) through PFS financing may be an effective means for jurisdictions to “do something” that improves the situation. However, successful PFS projects also involve requirements that are not well-suited to every program.

This debate brings together policy researchers, medical practitioners, decision-makers, and PFS experts to discuss and debate whether state and/or local governments could (or should) use PFS to implement MAT as an approach to address the opioid crisis in their jurisdictions.

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The Urban Institute

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