

ASSEMBLY, No. 5500

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 25, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot Program;” appropriates \$225,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2023)

1 AN ACT concerning opioid treatment programs, supplementing Title
2 26 of the Revised Statutes and making an appropriation.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. As used in this act:

8 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Human Services.

9 “Department” means the Department of Human Services.

10 “Division” means the Division of Mental Health and Addiction
11 Services in the Department of Human Services.

12 “Opioid treatment program” means a program certified as an
13 opioid treatment program by the federal Substance Abuse and
14 Mental Health Services Administration and licensed to operate as
15 an opioid treatment program in this State by the Department of
16 Human Services.

17 “Pilot program” means the Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot
18 Program established by this act.

19 “Remote methadone dosing” means the use of telehealth and
20 telemedicine to remotely monitor a patient’s methadone-based
21 treatment, which treatment is administered in the form of take-home
22 doses of methadone.

23

24 2. a. The Department of Human Services shall establish a three-
25 year Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot Program. The goal of the
26 program will be: to increase the compliance of, and reduce the costs
27 of providing, medication assisted treatment provided by
28 participating opioid treatment programs through the use of remote
29 methadone dosing; to evaluate the effect remote methadone dosing
30 has on patient outcomes and cost-savings in the treatment of opioid
31 use disorder; and to develop any recommendations for legislative or
32 regulatory action concerning whether remote methadone dosing
33 should be implemented in opioid treatment programs in this State.

34 b. The division shall select one opioid treatment program each
35 in the cities of Atlantic City, Camden, and Paterson to participate in
36 the pilot program.

37 c. In accordance with applicable federal and State laws and
38 when clinically appropriate, each opioid treatment program
39 participating in the pilot program shall be authorized to utilize
40 remote methadone dosing to treat a patient who is receiving
41 methadone-based treatment and is eligible to receive take-home
42 doses of methadone. In treating patients using remote methadone
43 dosing, participating opioid treatment programs shall utilize a
44 provider of an online-enabled technology application, service,
45 website, or system that facilitates remote methadone dosing
46 approved by the department.

47 d. Under no circumstances shall the State or an opioid treatment
48 program require that a patient participate in the pilot program.

1 e. Each opioid treatment program participating in the pilot
2 program shall annually report to the department, in a manner
3 prescribed by the commissioner, information on patient outcomes
4 and cost-savings as a result of the pilot program, including
5 information on:

6 (a) the number of patients treated using remote methadone
7 dosing;

8 (b) treatment compliance;

9 (c) the average time each patient spends being treated using
10 remote methadone dosing;

11 (d) patient retention;

12 (e) any realized reduction in medical transportation costs; and

13 (f) any other information the department deems relevant in
14 evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program.

15

16 3. The Department of Human Services shall, no later than four
17 years after the date the program is established, prepare and submit
18 to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
19 (C.52:14-19.1) to the Legislature, a report that shall include:

20 a. an analysis on the impact of the pilot program on patient
21 outcomes and cost-savings using the information collected pursuant
22 to subsection e. of section 2 of this act;

23 b. any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action
24 concerning the potential expansion of remote methadone dosing in
25 opioid treatment programs in this State; and

26 c. any other information the department deems relevant in
27 evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program.

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29 4. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
30 Department of Human Services the sum of \$225,000 to implement
31 the provisions of this act. The department shall issue a grant in the
32 amount of \$75,000 to each opioid treatment program selected to
33 participate in the Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot Program to
34 effectuate the provisions of this act.

35

36 5. The Commissioner of Human Services and the Commissioner
37 of Health may each adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the
38 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
39 seq.), as are necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

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41 6. This act shall take effect 90 days after the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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46 This bill establishes the Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot
47 Program in the Department of Human Services (DHS). The goal of
48 the program will be: to increase the compliance of, and reduce the
49 costs of providing, medication assisted treatment provided by

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1 participating opioid treatment programs (OTP) through the use of
2 remote methadone dosing; to evaluate the effect remote methadone
3 dosing has on patient outcomes and cost-savings in the treatment of
4 opioid use disorder; and to develop any recommendations for
5 legislative or regulatory action concerning whether remote
6 methadone dosing should be implemented in opioid treatment
7 programs in this State.

8 The bill defines “remote methadone dosing” to mean the use of
9 telehealth and telemedicine to remotely monitor a patient’s
10 methadone-based treatment, which treatment is administered in the
11 form of take-home doses of methadone.

12 Under this bill, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction
13 Services in the DHS will select one OTP each from the cities of
14 Atlantic City, Camden, and Paterson to participate in the program.
15 In accordance with applicable federal and State laws and when
16 clinically appropriate, each OTP participating in the pilot program
17 will be authorized to utilize remote methadone dosing to treat a
18 patient who is receiving methadone-based treatment and is eligible
19 to receive take-home doses of methadone. In treating patients using
20 remote methadone dosing, participating OTPs will utilize a provider
21 of an online-enabled technology application, service, website, or
22 system that facilitates remote methadone dosing approved by the
23 department. Under no circumstances will the State or an opioid
24 treatment program require that a patient participate in the pilot
25 program.

26 Each participating OTP will be required to annually report to the
27 department information on patient outcomes and cost-savings as a
28 result of the pilot program, including information on: the number
29 of patients treated using remote methadone dosing; treatment
30 compliance; the average time each patient spends being treated
31 using remote methadone dosing; patient retention; any realized
32 reduction in medical transportation costs; and any other
33 information the department deems relevant in evaluating the
34 effectiveness of the pilot program.

35 The bill requires DHS, no later than four years after the date the
36 program is established, to prepare and submit to the Governor and
37 Legislature a report that includes: an analysis on the impact of the
38 pilot program on patient outcomes and cost-savings using the
39 information received from participating OTPs; any
40 recommendations for legislative or regulatory action concerning the
41 potential expansion of remote methadone dosing in OTPs in this
42 State; and any other information the department deems relevant in
43 evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program

44 The bill is appropriates \$225,000 from the General Fund to the
45 DHS. The department will then issue a grant in the amount of
46 \$75,000 to each participating OTP to effectuate the provisions of
47 the bill.