

Hello my name is Sam Bevington. I'm a Speech-Language Pathologist that works with adults recovering from strokes and other brain injuries. Substance use and addiction results in far too many deaths each year, but also has other negative impacts on the living. There are some correlations with drug use and strokes or anoxic brain injuries. These individuals often have intensive amounts of caregiving needs for a prolonged timeframe or permanently; creating an emotional, financial, and logistical nightmare for many families, and disproportionately, families of color. It is necessary and more cost effective, and more equitable for us to not delay implementation of substance use treatment. We must help people get treatment before it is too late, before they have that "nightmare scenario" become a reality, before they become one of my patients, before they become one less viable caregiver for their own parent. There are many lasting and positive ways that people living with and recovering from substance use disorder can be members of their community, caregivers for their mom, parents to their children, (all of which results in cost savings to our Medicaid and other support systems) but this can't happen if we send people to prison or delay too long in providing them treatment options.

Please support immediate funding for these life and livelihood saving treatment services that will have so many rippling positive effects.