

Executive Summary

The opioid epidemic has created significant unintended problems worldwide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of opioid prescriptions quadrupled from 1999 to 2014, even though there has not been any reported change in the pain level of Americans. On average, 91 Americans die every day due to opioid overdose, and the data from 2016 indicates this figure is continuing to increase. Further, the CDC reports that over 200,000 Americans have died due to an opioid overdose since 1999. It was estimated that the societal costs due to opioid use disorder were \$55.7 billion in 2007 in the United States.

Justin, a 27-year old man who has sustained a back injury one year ago. Since then, he has been using opioids and having troubles in his personal and work life. Residing in Boston with his parents now, Justin has been asking for money and stealing opiates from his family. Those are the signs suggesting that Justin has opioid use disorder.

Following the case about Justin, the team at MCPHS University has developed a community-based pilot program to help Justin and other patients similar to Justin cope with the opioid epidemic. This pilot program, known as *Decriminalize, Destigmatize, Revitalize*, aims to create an Integrative Wellness Center which focuses on helping patients coping with opioid use disorder and giving necessary resources so that the patients can lead a better life. Our program includes three aspects:

1. Reducing the stigmatism by providing education about opioids and the opioid epidemic.
2. Developing an integrative medical team to help the patients combating with the opioid use disorder.
3. Making sure that the patient will remain in therapy until suboxone independence is established, and patient has tools to maintain a healthy lifestyle

Currently, no such program exists in the United States. Other program for opioid use disorder has not been successful in helping patients with opioid use disorder, such as the D.A.R.E program. This explains why the rate of opioid overdose keeps going up throughout the year despite many initiatives. Our team is determined to put the best initiatives out there into action through our integrative program. With our information primarily found through the most updated research studies about opioid use disorder and also the bill currently being petitioned by the Governor of Massachusetts, our unique program will fill the gaps on what a patient actually needs to cope with opioid use disorder. By helping the patients, in the long run the program will alleviate the burden of societal costs associated with opioid epidemic, improving the economic status of the country.