



November 29, 2017

Re: Board certification of medical directors

Dear Providers:

This letter shall clarify the obligation of programs to have in place a medical director that holds a certification as required by regulation in 14 NYCRR Part 800.3(d).

Each program must designate a physician, licensed and registered in New York State, with at least one year of education, training and/or experience in substance use disorder services, to serve as the medical director. Other than medical directors in place by July 1, 2011, all medical directors are required to either hold or obtain within four years of being hired, board certification as identified in Part 800.3(d)(2).

For physicians, the pathway to becoming certified in Addiction Medicine has changed. While some physicians with certification by the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) will remain certified by that organization in perpetuity, there will be no more physicians boarded by ABAM. The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) has not offered certification for several years and our understanding is that there is no plan for future certification by that organization.

As we continue to combat the current epidemic, OASAS does not intend to hold programs to an unobtainable standard. Therefore, medical directors in place as of November 29, 2017 will be exempt from the requirement to obtain board certification. Any medical directors hired after November 29, 2017 will be held to the current requirement to either hold, or obtain within four years, board certification.

Programs need not seek a waiver to hire a medical director who does not possess board certification at the time of hiring as they have four years to obtain such certification.

Any questions may be directed to Legal@oasas.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert Kent
General Counsel