

# Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine

*A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine*



## **President's Message**

*Matthew Felgus, MD, FASAM, President*

Hello WISAM Members,

With the end of the academic year fast upon us, many of us will be taking time off. I just returned from a three-week trip to Egypt. While there, my partner and I found ourselves among an amazing group of people from around the globe, all of whom were doing their part to make the world a better place. It expanded my mind on multiple fronts as we met a banker from Luxembourg during our first night in Cairo. I hadn't considered that anyone in the banking profession would be doing anything of a world-healing nature, but this man spent most of his time in his native South Africa providing loans for projects that would help people rise out of poverty.

We also met people in the healthcare field and on comparing notes, the similarities of the challenges treating patients with addiction issues far outweigh the differences in rich vs poor countries, religious affiliations, and different cultural and ethnic groups. There were some interesting differences as well, such as Tramadol being one of the most abused opioids in Egypt, possession of which is punishable by long imprisonment.

So, as we start our summer excursions, our connectedness to those around us matters, as does our willingness to learn. This is as true for those we talk to during an unexpected encounter as it is for those we treat clinically.

WISAM will be a little quieter during the summer months as we take time off from our monthly teleconferences after the May call. However, we continue to plan for the WISAM 2019 Annual Conference taking place September 26-27 in Madison.

Please stay connected! As an organization, WISAM is only as strong as our involvement with all of you, our members.

## **Ritu Bhatnagar, MD, MPH Named 'Superhero Of Medicine'**



The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation honored Ritu Bhatnagar, MD, MPH, with the Superhero of Medicine Award during its Annual Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction in Madison on April 5. The Superhero of Medicine Award is presented annually to a physician nominated for having superpower-like attributes and using them to go above and beyond the call of their profession.

Doctor Bhatnagar is an addiction psychiatrist and medical co-director of the NewStart addiction service within UnityPoint Health-Meriter in Madison and is a clinical professor at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health Department of Psychiatry. She is an active member of the Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine (WISAM), is the

WISAM representative to the Council on Legislation for the Wisconsin Medical Society and is a member of the University of Wisconsin Opioid Treatment Task Force. [Read more.](#)

### **Michael Miller, MD Receives John P. McGovern Award**



Michael Miller, MD, DFASAM, DLFAPA, was presented with the John P. McGovern Award and recognized as a leader in the field of addiction medicine at the American Society of Addiction Medicine's 50th Annual Conference in Orlando. The award recognizes "an individual who has made highly meritorious contributions to public policy, treatment, research, or prevention which has increased our understanding of the relationship of addiction and society." Doctor Miller, a past president of the Wisconsin Chapter, ASAM, currently serves as its Policy/Legislative Chair.

### **WISAM Telephone Town Hall is May 23**

Join WISAM for discussion on issues affecting one's practice, patient cares or the overall addiction medicine landscape. These teleconference calls serve as an open forum for members and non-members alike to informally interact with WISAM leaders.

Calls are held from 7:00 to 8:00 pm the fourth Thursday of each month (with time off in the summer months). Let us know if you have a topic for future discussion.

Thursday, May 23, 2019, 7:09-8:00 pm CDT

Participation Instructions:

- Dial-in: 563-999-1012
- Access Code: 151743#

### **WISAM at the Forefront of Collaboration with DOJ**

*Mike Miller, MD, WISAM Public Policy Chair*

In February, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Wisconsin sent letters to Wisconsin physicians encouraging them to take a step back and "take stock of" their practices and their prescribing patterns in light of the opioid epidemic. While the letter indicated the recipient was not under any sort of investigation by federal prosecutors, the outcomes left a chilling effect on physicians to receive such a letter from prosecutors in the U.S. Department of Justice.

After hearing of these letters, I immediately reached out to Mark Grapentine, JD, Senior Vice President for Governmental Relations at the Wisconsin Medical Society, to gauge the reaction of the Wisconsin physician community and to discuss next steps. In short order, consensus developed to prepare a joint press release as well as a joint letter from WMS and WISAM to the U.S. Attorney's office in Madison. [Read more.](#)

### **WISAM 2019 Annual Conference – Registration is Open!**

Registration is now open for the Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine's 2019 Annual Conference, September 26-27, 2019 at the Pyle Center in Madison. This year's theme, Healing through Partnerships, highlights the importance of collaboration in the diagnosis and treatment of addiction. An exciting lineup of topics and presenters will ensure this conference provides timely and important education for attendees. [Learn more and register today!](#)

## Free X-Waiver Training Series Continues

Six sessions remain in the complimentary 2019 X-Waiver Training Series, a partnership between DHS and WISAM designed to increase treatment capacity for opioid use disorder through expanded prescribing of buprenorphine, one of three Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder. Ten in-person training sessions for health care providers eligible to prescribe buprenorphine are scheduled across Wisconsin this year. Each session, when paired with an online session offered through the American Society of Addiction Medicine, provides the necessary education for participants to qualify for a waiver to prescribe buprenorphine as part of a medication-assisted treatment plan for opioid dependency. Course details and registration information are [available online](#).

## News Conference Addresses MAT Coverage under BadgerCare

On May 8, 2019, Citizen Action of Wisconsin, State Representatives Chris Taylor (D-Madison), Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) and Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) released a report documenting that expanding Medicaid would reduce financial barriers to accessing critical anti-opioid medications for working Wisconsinites. WISAM Public Policy Chair, Michael Miller, MD, participated in the [news conference](#), which took place in the Senate Parlor at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, WI.

Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine  
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