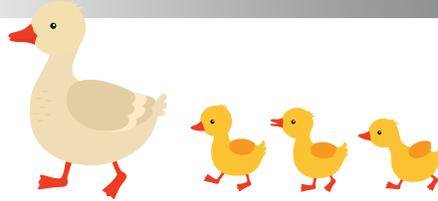




The (not so) Lame Duck Advocacy Wins of 2023



Harm Reduction

S3957/A5630 which expands exemptions from drug paraphernalia laws to certain harm reduction supplies was signed into law by Governor Murphy on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law will reduce the harms and risks associated with drug use, such as overdose, infection, and criminalization, by allowing people to access and possess certain harm reduction supplies without criminalizing them.

S3287/A4852 which requires institutions of higher education to maintain supply and develop policy governing use of Naloxone hydrochloride nasal spray for opioid overdose emergencies passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law will save lives and prevent overdoses, which is a leading cause of death among young adults in the United States.

S4156/A4337 which requires the Department of Health to provide information to statewide 2-1-1 telephone system regarding the location of safe disposal sites for hypodermic syringes and needles and prescription drugs passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

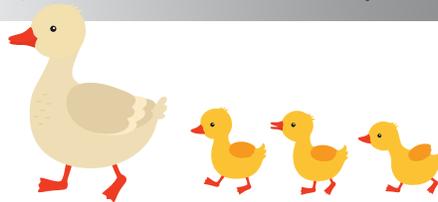
Why this is important: This law will help people who need to dispose of their unused or expired medical devices safely and responsibly and reduce the public health risks associated with unsafe practices.

A5326/S4250 which establishes Community Crisis Response Advisory Council and community crisis response teams' pilot program passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law aims to address the root causes of public safety issues, such as racial disparities, police violence, mental health crises, and substance use by empowering communities to take a leading role in preventing and responding to emergencies.



The (not so) Lame Duck Advocacy Wins of 2023



Mental Health

S1662/A3526 which requires the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council to prepare a report regarding suicide prevention instruction in public schools passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: this bill can help identify the best practices, challenges, and recommendations for improving the awareness, education, and intervention strategies for students, teachers, and parents.

Work Force

S3061/A5311 which *enters New Jersey into Counseling Compact* passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law would eliminate the necessity for licenses in multiple states, which can reduce administrative and financial burdens for counselors. The Compact will also aid in workforce shortage issues in behavioral health as well as increase Telehealth access.

Barriers to Recovery

A5826/ S4211 which *revises and clarifies certain expungement procedures* passed in the Assembly and Senate. It was sent to Governor Murphy for signature on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law will help to address the excessive expungement waitlist. People who have paid their fines and applied for expungement continue to face barriers to employment, housing, education, and other opportunities because of their criminal records.

S2716/A4153 which *requires NJ FamilyCare to reimburse claims for covered services submitted by clinical social workers, professional counselors, and marriage and family therapists under certain circumstances* was signed into law by Governor Murphy on 1/8/24.

Why this is important: This law increases health equity by expanding access to healthcare for those on Medicaid, who are the highest risk for mental health and substance use disorders.