



From the Minnesota Chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine

February 8, 2023

Sen. Omar Fateh

Rep. Gene Pelowski

95 University Avenue W.

100 Dr. Rev. Martin King Jr. Blvd

Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3219

491 State Office Building

St. Paul, MN 55155

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Dear Chairs Pelowski and Fateh:

I am writing to you as the president-elect of the Minnesota Society of Addiction Medicine as well as a former fellow of the only addiction medicine fellowship in Minnesota (or neighboring ND or SD). Since graduation, I have been working at the Minneapolis VA, helping veterans with substance use and chronic pain from their time in service, as well as teaching future fellows in addiction medicine as associate program director of the fellowship.

Unhealthy substance use and addiction are not a new problem, but unfortunately, they are a growing one with increasing rates of deaths due to overdose (>100,000 deaths between April 2020-April 2021 as per the CDC. a 30% increase from the year prior). Substance use increased during the pandemic, and this was compounded by increasing availability and use of fentanyl and methamphetamine in our communities.

The Addiction Medicine Fellowship is essential to train providers who can provide direct patient care to those critically in need (it is generally estimated that only 13% of patients with a substance use disorder received appropriate treatment in 2018 as per NIDA/NIH surveys). The fellows in the program go on to leadership and teaching roles as well, training a whole workforce that is necessary to tackle this problem. Former fellows have founded multiple inpatient consultation services at hospital systems around the state, are working with Native Americans near reservations and in rural Minnesota, and are involved in research and teaching at Hennepin, the Minneapolis VA, and the University of Minnesota.

The funding request would train up to 3 physicians in the specialty of addiction medicine per year. There is a dire need for addiction care for some of the most vulnerable people in our state and this funding will directly improve access to these life-saving services.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

David Peter, MD, MPH, FASAM

Associate Program Director

UMN Addiction Medicine Fellowship