Today's Stateline article by Christine Vestal highlights three states--California, Maryland and New York--that are moving to use Medicaid reimbursement policies to facilitate more counseling for substance use addicts who are in medication-assisted treatment.

Treatment experts believe that a combination of medication (methadone or buprenorphine) and counseling has the best chance of treating opioid addiction.

The article highlights new policies in Maryland:

To encourage the centers to offer more counseling when patients need it, Maryland’s Medicaid agency is changing the way it reimburses them. Rather than paying a flat rate for all patients, the federal-state health care program for the poor in March will begin to pay providers for as much counseling and related medical services as are needed for individual patients. At the same time, the state will lower its traditional per-person weekly reimbursement rate for opioid treatment centers.

Medicaid policies in New York and California, according to the article, are also helping to deliver counseling in addition to medication.

The article highlights one individual's treatment, showing through example how addiction is a disease and how recovery is possible through evidence-based treatment.

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