



A MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN MEDICAL & DENTAL ASSOCIATIONS

Inaugural Spring 2022 Newsletter

Introduction

AMS Leadership Team

We are excited to announce the newest sibling in our family, our [Addiction Medicine Section](#) (AMS)! Our young section is going after the heart of Jesus amid the worst polydrug/fentanyl [overdose epidemic](#) in history. While you may not be called specifically to integrate addiction treatment and recovery into your clinic or hospital, substance abuse and addiction has become so prevalent and the illicit market so powerful, that almost none of our practices, communities, churches or families are unaffected by the devastating medical, intra and interpersonal and spiritual consequences of addictive substances.



The AMS team would like to invite us all at CMDA, whether clinician, pastor, researcher, peer recovery advocate or concerned citizen, to join us under the banner of Christ-centered addiction treatment and recovery as CMDA goes after the heart of Jesus in domestic missions. AMS has seen the power of God at work in our patients lives who have overcome addiction and are celebrating recovery in their new lives in Jesus.

"My journey has been a very long one, including not a denial that there is a Lord, but more of a 'I don't need Him.' At the darkest time in my life, the Holy Spirit visited with an incredibly strong message of hope. Since then, I have searched and found help with physicians who have encouraged me and provided assistance with pharmaceutical interventions. The road was still quite bumpy, but eventually with faith, hope and a lot of love I found a way forward. There is a tremendous network of believers out there who can give you hope, and a way to grace if you're open to it. Pass it on...."

—Doug, child of God in recovery

Would you pray with us as we seek to mobilize Christians who God has strategically placed in every city, town and village to activate as salt and light? How has God been tugging at your heart? Maybe it's for those suffering from certain physical illnesses, mental illness, homelessness, trauma and abuse, racism, injustice or human trafficking. Our AMS team has felt the ache of Jesus' heart for the marginalized and addicted. But we have also encountered Jesus in our patients so vividly and our patients have drawn us closer to His sweet love. Sometimes, we don't know who has been blessed more! Would you join us as we walk alongside you in Jesus' great redemptive plan?

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

—Jesus in Matthew 25:40, NIV

Come hang out with us at [2022 CMDA National Convention](#) or our twice monthly prayer meetings. In the coming months we will update you on clinical and ministry resources as well as a formal networking and mentorship system to equip you in your call with like-minded brothers and sisters. Be sure to sign up on our webpage, so you don't miss out these exciting updates!

If you want to get in touch, email us at ams@cmda.org.

A Word from the AMS Chair

Warren Yamashita, MD, MPH

"Persons with severe addictions are among those contemporary prophets that we ignore to our own demise, for they show us who we truly are."

—Philosopher and Theologian Kent Dunnington

I am so blessed to join our AMS team as CMDA expands into this new frontier. Not only is addiction medicine a newly accredited [ACGME Board Certified](#) subspecialty as of 2017, but thanks to recent advances in neurobiology, addiction medicine is a budding new field. I am grateful AMS has chosen fidelity to evidence-based approaches and guidance from Addiction Medicine Fellowships to keep us on course in the years ahead. We all have felt the weight of the unprecedented polydrug epidemic with its rising overdoses and deaths. Yet as Jehosephat prayed, "For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you," AMS too is looking on the Lord to lead us (2 Chronicles 20:12, ESV). Our medical and church institutions carry a troubled legacy of stigmatizing and condemning addicts. We believe now is the time to turn from our institutional sins and build a more compassionate healthcare system and church that reflects Jesus by caring for the least of these with compassionate care.

One strategy we believe God is moving in is new church and medical partnerships in local communities. [CMDA Embrace Recovery Buffalo](#) and [Yale's IMANI Breakthrough Program](#) are two leading examples. IMANI particularly partners with Black and Latino churches, and Yale's research team has found their church-led and clinic-supported recovery partnership has serviced more than 1,000 addiction referrals. In fact, 80 percent of these referrals have never

received medical treatment for their substance use before! The Connecticut and New York programs have discovered that one key element of these successful partnerships is recovery coaches or peer recovery specialists with professionally recognized training and certification who support patients within the community and bridge previously siloed institutions. We believe church and medical partnerships are a necessary and evidence-based model to break the strongholds of addiction over our patients and communities.



We look forward to combining the best that MAT and recovery ministries have to offer in an evidence-based and collaborative manner. We believe these partnerships are vital to promoting health and spiritual thriving in our communities afflicted with addiction and despair. As the apostle Paul teaches in Ephesians 5:18-20, the Spirit can displace addictions and fill our lives with psalms, hymns and songs. Jesus reminds us, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10, ESV).

On a personal note, you may be asking why this guy newly out of fellowship is chairing a national section. I often ask myself this as well. To be brutally honest, during the 2015 CMDA National Convention, I questioned whether CMDA was right for me. But then I went to prayer and heard God speak, “**I am not done with CMDA.**” Ever since I have had a burden for CMDA on my heart, and six years later, I saw God making good on His word. First, I joined CMDA residents and fellows from around the nation weekly in fervent prayer, chasing after the heart of God. Then, I was invited onto the Racism, Reconciliation, Equality and Diversity (R²ED) Committee, which is bringing needed conversations to CMDA. And then God lit a fire with the Addiction Medicine Section!

For myself, I have encountered Jesus in my deepest pain, and His love is blindingly bright! I have found Jesus in my patients, particularly those who are deeply afflicted spiritually (Matthew 25:40). Their physical, psychiatric or addiction ailments becomes a door for both clinician and patient to encounter Jesus’ bright love in that pain. It is this sword of light, forged in the fire of the crucifixion, that those in recovery carry.

I believe God is truly doing a new work in CMDA and using AMS as a spear tip for His work. God has placed similar words in the hearts of our leadership team, and we are standing in one accord in prayer claiming God’s promises. I encourage you to meet our faithful [leadership team here](#). Voice Chair Dr. Kurt Bravata and myself were featured on an episode of the *CMDA Matters podcast* with CMDA CEO Dr. Mike Chupp to share the story of how this new section began. We invite you to join us in singing and praising Jesus for the work He has done, is doing and will do. We added a [worship playlist](#) on our webpage to get started! Join us as we celebrate this new song God is bringing to CMDA as we go after the heart of Jesus together. Careful, He might just bless us, our patients and our communities with incredible blessings!

Mission and Purpose

Mission

The Addiction Medicine Section of CMDA exists to prevent and treat addiction and transform lives, by God's grace, love and power. We strive to provide compassionate excellence in all aspects of addiction care, including whole-person prevention and treatment, education, advocacy, empowerment of others, research, church and community partnerships and interprofessional collaboration and support.

Purpose

To **RISE** with Christ and, by His power, excel in these areas:

- **Research** – Support, assist and network with those interested in doing faith-based study and research in addiction medicine.
 - **Inspire** – Encourage and support opportunities for interprofessional health professionals, pastors, theologians and the broader recovery care community to co-labor and network together to share ideas, concerns, successes and prayer for one another.
 - **Serve** - Provide excellent, Christ-centered, evidence-based, clinical care to individuals struggling with addictions and their families using the biopsychosocial-spiritual model of whole-person healthcare.
 - **Educate** – Educate, equip and mentor others about successful approaches to addiction, including students, health professionals, patients, families, churches, community groups, politicians, media and others.
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Welcome from the CMDA Psychiatry Section

Dr. Tom Okamoto

As the current chair of the Psychiatry Section of CMDA, I want to support and celebrate CMDA's introduction of the Addiction Medicine Section, chaired by Dr. Warren Yamashita and co-chaired by Dr. Kurt Bravata. Along with many other physicians, I have treated countless patients with substance use disorders through my years of practice. I have worked within detox protocols as well as in the acute treatment of intoxication and withdrawal symptoms. As a psychiatrist, my practice overflows with those needing psychiatric care along with 12 step and recovery modalities, that at times can be unavailable or inaccessible.



As of April 2021, the CDC estimated more than 100,000 U.S. deaths by drug overdose over the prior year, the highest yearly death toll on record! Seeing the methamphetamine, marijuana and fentanyl waves crash upon our patients and their families leaves us thirsting for evidence-based solutions for healing and restoration of their physical, emotional and spiritual health. The leadership of the new Addiction Medicine Section is clearly dedicated toward becoming a resource for the members of the CMDA and their patients. I and my colleagues in the Psychiatry

Section leadership welcome this new addition and look forward to a fruitful collaboration furthering God's providence in this new branch of medicine and ministry of the CMDA.

AMS Life Abundant Shirts

We are excited to announce our inaugural AMS "John 10:10 Life Abundant" shirts! We have the honor to partner with a Christian recovery residential ministry to screen print the shirts. Not only does every dollar directly support those in recovery, but we have partnered with Pastor John Kula and his team to pray over each and every shirt to be a powerful ministry blessing. The bouquet of flowers and luscious roses represents abundance of life stemming from the base of the cross. The cross was painted red to remind us Jesus bled and suffered for us. We chose the white roses to represent innocence, hope and new beginnings. The thriving white roses represent the heart of a believer or an old believer breaking the bonds of addiction for the first time. The sky blue shirt color itself represents the refreshing breath of the Holy Spirit at work in people's lives. We hope this shirt will bless you!



Buy one today and wear it at the 2022 CMDA National Convention in April with us!

[**Click Here to Purchase!**](#)

Upcoming Events

1. [American Society of Addiction Medicine 53rd Annual Conference](#) in Hollywood, Florida on March 31 - April 3.
2. [Christian Community Health Fellowship's National Conference](#) in Cincinnati, Ohio on April 7-9. AMS will be giving a workshop on "The Two-Edged Sword: Church and Medical Partnerships." Come join us!
3. 2022 [CMDA National Convention](#) in Indianapolis, Indiana on April 21-24. AMS will partner with the Psychiatry Section to host four rich sessions on various aspects of addictions. We will also have a Saturday AMS luncheon to meet and fellowship!
4. [California Society of Addiction Medicine 2022 State of the Art Addiction Medicine Conference](#) in San Diego, California on August 24-27.

Interested in having AMS meet with your local ministry? Contact us at ams@cnda.org with ideas and requests.

Donations

While we have so many dreams, we can't afford them all. For example, we aren't able to afford a booth at the National ASAM or CSAM conferences this year, but we plan to in the future. Consider [donating here](#) to help AMS host events, develop resources and grow this movement!

AMS Prayer Times

You are invited to the AMS Intercessory Meetings twice a month. Please see the links below for the recurring meetings:

- Second Tuesday evening of the month at 6 p.m. ET, 5 p.m. CT and 3 p.m. PT.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88452527299?pwd=SW9yaHl5b2lnVGdXOFo3SHI2bmRqQT09>
Meeting ID: 884 5252 7299 Passcode: 872122
- Fourth Tuesday morning of the month at 9:30 a.m. ET, 8:30 a.m. CT and 6:30 a.m. PT.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87041617350?pwd=aVA2RmF5WlpGdFpZblZ0S2hCdnF6UT09>
Meeting ID: 870 4161 7350 Passcode: 202396

Dial by your location +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC) +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

CMDA Embrace Recovery Buffalo Testimonies

"My doctor has introduced me to a wonderful woman Jean (an ERB Life Recovery Coach). I was

in a major car accident over 15 years ago and basically lost it all, my mind, my body and, most of all, my soul. With Jean I have become more aware and understanding of others. Jean has talked me through some personal and emotional times. Jean is ALWAYS there for me when I need her. When I'm sad, angry and confused, Jean always seems to talk me into a better place. I feel so much better after our discussions and meetings. We have wonderful times together, baking, shopping, going to church and, my favorite, COFFEE! Coffee talks are great! Jean has been a wonderful, loving blessing to my life."

—Mary

"The hardest part of my recovery process so far has been admitting that, yes, I do have a real problem on my hands and then actually seeking help. I sat in the doctor's office and cried, really cried, for the first time since I was a kid. First, I had to admit to myself that I was addicted and things in my life are out of control. Then I had to truthfully ask for help. Before God led me to recovery, I was a full-blown addict. I was addicted to opioids—any and as many as I could get my hands on. Where and how I was going to get my next batch of pills was the very thing that crossed my mind in the morning when I woke up, and the very last thought I had at night before I went to bed. It was all I really cared about. In the end, I was spent, exhausted from living a life dedicated solely to getting and staying high. The guilt and shame got to me. I couldn't go on living like that anymore. Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired, like I was? If so, you're not alone and you're in the right place to start your journey to living a good, happy, safe life full of joy and love like God intends it to be. My doctor provided me with all the resources and his gracious support, which saved my life from the devil's chains of addiction. He is a caring doctor and person who can lead you out of a desperate, depressing state of despair and into a life of pure and true euphoria, exhilarating enthusiasm, and everlasting energy. Life is best lived with God. A life of faith in recovery is a beautiful, amazing and meaningful. I was terrified of the dope sickness that was building up inside of me and I was horrified that I wouldn't be able to work, to function, to live or even to simply exist without opioids. Then God...a light where peace, well-being and security shine bright. In this light, my relationships with my family and friends vastly improved, my work ability soared, I was recognized with an award at my job and my connection to God has never been stronger. People forgive and move forward, as long as you can show them that you've changed for the better and are never going back. Trust the process and have faith. Please trust me when I say that you will be amazed at all the glorious blessings and all of the unimaginable, magical things that God has to offer you in your life on the other side of addiction. I feel grateful and blessed every single day on this side of life! You will too! Go with God to the other side and live free in a life full of possibilities! God Bless."

—Kevin

Resources

Looking for more resources? Email us at ams@cnda.org

[SAMHSA's National Helpline | SAMHSA](#)

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or

substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline | SAMHSA](#)

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

If you need help now, please call 911 or contact SAMHSA's [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#). SAMHSA is a partner of the [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#), a public-private partnership advancing the national strategy for suicide prevention.

Professional Addiction Medicine Organizations

1. [American Society of Addiction Medicine](#)
2. [California Society of Addiction Medicine](#)

[Buprenorphine Waivered Practitioner | SAMHSA](#)

This is a medical resource for clinicians. Qualified clinicians can offer buprenorphine for the treatment of opioid use disorders. Visit this website to see the latest updates on the changing guidelines to become a clinician that can offer this evidence-based treatment in your practice.

[Providers Clinical Support System](#)

Providers Clinical Support System is a program funded by SAMHSA geared toward educating and supporting primary care clinicians who wish to treat patients with opioid use disorder. They provide training, clinical mentorship and resources.

Peer Recovery Specialist Certified Training Resources

We have found both programs listed below to be reputable and evidence-based. The certifications provide quality assurance and allow volunteers credibility to partner with clinics and hospitals.

1. [Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery](#) - A 30-hour certification course currently being utilized by CMDA Embrace Recovery Buffalo coalition.
2. IMANI Breakthrough Program – They currently offer their own 38-hour certification, and they are willing to provide training for other programs. Email ams@cmda.org to get connected with this program.

[Celebrate Recovery Mutual Support Group](#)

In 1991, John Baker wrote Pastor Rick Warren with the vision of starting Celebrate Recovery as a Christian 12-step mutual program; thus, it was born at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. Since then, it has spread nationally and internationally and has helped more than five million people experience freedom in Christ not just from substance abuse but also sexual addiction, codependency, anger, depression and so much more. You can download the mobile application to find a local group and purchase their starter materials.

12-step Mutual Support Group Programs

Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob when Dr. Bob put down his last drink. A recent [Cochrane Review](#) study finds that AA and 12-step facilitation programs are evidence-based, as effective as CBT or motivational enhancement therapy and incredibly cost effective. Few Christians know that AA was born out of a radical 1921 Christian group

called A First Century Christian Fellowship. Today, both the secular medical community and church are starting to recognize the important role 12-step programs have in setting communities free from addiction. There are now national and international 12-step groups for alcohol, methamphetamine, cocaine, cannabis, sex addiction, gambling, overeating, etc. A simple Google search will help you find the right group.

1. [Alcoholics Anonymous](#)
2. [Alateen](#) (For adolescents)
3. [Narcotics Anonymous](#)
4. [Marijuana Anonymous](#)
5. [Sex Addicts Anonymous](#)
6. [Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous](#)
7. [Sexaholics Anonymous](#)
8. [Gamblers Anonymous](#)

Codependency Mutual Support Groups

Codependency is an unhealthy coping pattern characterized by imbalanced relationships where one person enables another person's self-destructive behaviors (such as addiction, poor mental health, immaturity, irresponsibility, etc.) and/or undermines their own health and the health of the relationship. Family members of those with addiction very often suffer from codependency. Christians also are prone to codependency, especially those who have experienced trauma or dysfunctional households or churches.

1. [Al-Anon Family Groups](#) (for family members of people with drinking problems)
2. [CoDA.org](#) (for anyone with codependency)

Church and Healthcare Partnership Examples

1. [IMANI Breakthrough Recovery Program](#): Dr. Ayana Jordan and Pastor Kelcy Steele's Yale program
2. [CMDA's Embrace Recovery Buffalo](#): Dr. Darren Caparezzo, Pastors Al and Lawrence, Debra Minotti and many others have paved the way with creating CMDA's first organized thriving church and healthcare partnership.

Other Useful Church Resources

1. [Covenant Eyes](#): Pornography accountability software and support.
2. [BrainBuddy](#): Pornography and Masturbation app based on cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness and internet filters to support recovery.
3. [Divorce Care](#): A national divorce support group. Often families suffering from addiction, will need support for incredible stressors on their marriage.

Educational Resources

1. [Pleasure Unwoven Documentary](#): The single best documentary made to date to help anyone learn how addiction affects the brain. Warnings, it's an older documentary. You have permission to laugh and learn.

Practice Guidance Resources

1. [American College of Emergency Physician's useful Buprenorphine induction resource](#)

2. [Treating Opioid Use Disorder as a Chronic Condition: A Practice Manual for Family Physicians](#)
3. [ASAM National Practice Guideline for the Use of Medications in the Treatment of Addiction Involving Opioid Use](#)
4. [Addressing Alcohol Use Practice Manual: An Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention Program](#)
5. [The ASAM Clinical Practice Guideline on Alcohol Withdrawal Management](#)
6. [Timeline: History of Addiction Treatment](#)
7. [Addiction Recovery Blog](#)

Non-academic Addiction Recovery Books and Spiritual Resources

1. [The Life Recovery Bible NLT](#)
2. [NIV Recovery Bible](#)
3. [Turn Your Season Around: How God Transforms Your Life by Darryl Strawberry](#)
4. [The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For? by Rick Warren](#)
5. [Hope Dealer by David Stoeker](#)