

ECOSOC Resolution 2004/40

Guidelines for psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment of persons dependent on opioids

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the existence of a large number of persons dependent on opioids,¹ who are either receiving or in need of treatment for their opioid dependence,

Respecting the sovereign right of Member States to establish and implement effective treatment strategies,

Noting the evidence on the effectiveness of various treatments, inter alia abstinence therapy,

Recognizing the existence of a wide range of evidence-based treatment options,

Emphasizing that psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment is one of the treatment options available for improving the health, well-being and social functioning of persons dependent on opioids, and for preventing the transmission of HIV and other blood-borne diseases,

Acknowledging that the present resolution may be applicable only to Member States that are providing or planning psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment for opiate addiction,

Recalling the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol,² in particular article 38, on measures against the abuse of drugs,

Recalling also the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction,³ adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session,

Taking into account the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the World Health Organization in 1993 after the twenty-eighth meeting of the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence, on the need to increase access to effective treatment,

Taking note of the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2003,⁴ in particular paragraphs 222 and 328 of that report,

Taking note also of the position paper of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS on substitution maintenance therapy in the management of opioid dependence and HIV/AIDS prevention,

¹ "Dependent" is used in the present resolution to mean addicted.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ General Assembly resolution S-20/3, annex.

⁴ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2003* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XI.1).

Acknowledging that work has been undertaken on psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment in different regions,

Invites the World Health Organization, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, subject to the availability of voluntary funds, which might be either from general-purpose funds, in accordance with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs guidelines for the use of general-purpose funds,⁵ or from earmarked funds, to develop and publish minimum requirements and international guidelines on psychosocially assisted pharmacological treatment of persons dependent on opioids,⁶ taking into account regional initiatives in this field, in order to assist the Member States concerned.

47th plenary meeting
21 July 2004

⁵ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 8, (E/2001/28/Rev.1), Part II, chap. I, resolution 44/20, annex.*

⁶ See, for example, M. Gossop, M. Grant and A. Wodak, eds., *The Uses of Methadone in the Treatment and Management of Opioid Dependence*, WHO/MNH/DAT/89.1 (Geneva, World Health Organization, 1989).