

Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine

A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine



WISAM President's Message, December 2018

The impact of substance use disorders is in the news every day -- there is no escaping the effects this has on patient care whether you are a physician, nurse, pharmacist or therapist. However, not all of our colleagues are comfortable with this unavoidable reality, which is why it is so important for all of us to stay informed and to serve as points of contact along the way.

I've heard some of you, especially newer WISAM members, say that you don't feel you know enough about addiction to be able to serve as a point of contact for your colleagues. But the fact that you've joined WISAM and are reading this now makes a huge difference in moving our respective fields forward in this critical subject. Keep connected and keep learning!

As one who started in the field as a drug counselor and finished addiction psychiatry training in the late 90s at the crest of the '*patients can't get addicted to opioids if they are using them only for pain*' era, I can say from experience that your involvement matters more than you think. And for this I thank you and honor your willingness to join with us.

And for those of you who have been on the front lines of addiction treatment for years, deep gratitude to you as well. WISAM is an amazing organization with tireless, committed officers, committee chairs, administrative staff and members. It's been an honor to represent and work alongside of you all. Let's keep moving things forward!

Have a wonderful holiday season, and best wishes for 2019!

Matt Felgus, MD
President

Fighting Addiction in Rural Northern Wisconsin

Editor's note: the following excerpt is taken from "For One Rural Community, Fighting Addiction Started With Recruiting The Right Doctor" heard on NPR's [Weekend Edition Sunday](#), Sunday, December 9, 2018. Mark Lim, MD is an active member of WISAM/ASAM who has presented at WISAM annual conferences. He is board certified in both Addiction Medicine and Family Medicine, and serves as the Medical Director of NorthLakes Community Clinic in Ashland, Wisconsin.

Dr. Mark Lim says he is surprised he's here in this 8,000 person port-town on Lake Superior. He'd dreamed of living in a big city since he moved to the U.S. from the Philippines. When he got the call about the job, he was hesitant at first. "I didn't know where that was on a map," he recalls.



But he saw this part of Wisconsin, where the death rate from drug and alcohol abuse is [nearly twice as high](#) as the state average, as a place where he could make a difference.

Lim's been board certified in addiction medicine since it was officially recognized as a subspecialty in 2016, but he's been working in the field since about 10 years ago when he started working in an addiction practice in Maine.

He took the Wisconsin job, with one stipulation: He would start a program to address addiction as a whole. His expertise would be just one part of the treatment approach.

"If I'm just going to be the Suboxone doctor I'm not doing the full practice of addiction," Lim says. [Read full story.](#)

January 8 Lunch Program to Focus on the Future of Marijuana and CBD in Wisconsin

Marijuana was among the big winners at the polls in November, with voters in counties across the state signaling their support for legalization. Backers also have a friend in Gov.-elect Tony Evers, who has said doctors should be able to use cannabis to treat patients. A January 8 Wisconsin Health News panel lunch program in Madison will take a closer look at the legal and health issues around marijuana and its future in the state. [Learn more and register.](#)

Upcoming Telephone Town Hall Meetings

Join WISAM leaders on our monthly telephone town hall meetings! Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Thursday, January 24, 2019, 7:00-8:00 pm ([link](#))
- Thursday, February 28, 2019, 7:00-8:00 pm ([link](#))

Submit your ideas for discussion to WISAM@badgerbay.co.

Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine
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