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## MAHEC INVITED TO WHITE HOUSE EVENT ON TUESDAY

### WHAT:

[Dr. Blake Fagan, a family physician](#) who directs the office-based opioid treatment services provided at MAHEC's family health centers, has been invited to represent MAHEC at the "White House Removing Barriers to Treatment" event celebrating passage of the bipartisan [Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act](#). The MAT Act, signed into law by President Joe Biden in late December as part of the FY23 omnibus spending package, expands access to proven, lifesaving medication-assisted treatment for people struggling with Opioid Use Disorder. [*See more below*].

### WHEN:

Tuesday, January 24, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### WHERE:

Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Room 474, 1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC

Video of event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neLEyVvcaBw>

### WHY:

For five years, MAHEC has taken a leadership role in partnering with various organizations to train healthcare providers and medical residency programs across the state in medication-assisted treatment, safe pain management, and safe opioid prescribing practices. MAHEC's and our partners' work in addressing the nation's opioid crisis resulted in the invitation to this White House event.

### WHO:

The event will feature Administration officials, including Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP); Anne Milgram, Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration; and Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (It has not been announced whether President Joe Biden will be in attendance at this event.)

(MORE)

**ABOUT THE MAINSTREAMING ADDICTION TREATMENT ACT:**

- Prior to passage of the MAT Act, physicians and other providers had to obtain a special DEA certification, known as the X waiver, to prescribe buprenorphine.
- Buprenorphine is a proven, lifesaving medication that diminishes the effects of physical dependence to opioids, such as painful withdrawal symptoms and cravings.
- The abolishment of the burdensome X waiver allows clinicians to prescribe buprenorphine with a standard controlled substance license, just like they do other medications, thereby increasing access for patients and reducing stigma.
- **Bottom line: The MAT Act makes it easier for patients with Opioid Use Disorder to receive lifesaving medication-assisted treatment from their healthcare providers, supporting their long-term recovery.**

**TO ARRANGE PHOTOS/INTERVIEWS with DR. FAGAN**

- Contact: Kathi Petersen, MAHEC Communications Manager

**ABOUT MAHEC:**

Established nearly five decades ago, MAHEC – Mountain Area Health Education Center – is a leader in healthcare, education, and innovation. Headquartered in Asheville with satellite offices in [various locations](#) across its 16-county Western North Carolina service area, MAHEC is the largest of nine [Area Health Education Centers](#) in North Carolina. With more than 1,000 employees, MAHEC’s mission is to recruit, train and retain the workforce needed to create a healthy North Carolina, with a focus on primary care in rural communities and those with less access to resources.

MAHEC’s 14-acre Biltmore campus is also home to [UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC](#), an academic health center in partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill that includes programs from the UNC School of Medicine, UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, and UNC Adams School of Dentistry. A private, [501\(c\)3 nonprofit organization](#), MAHEC will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2024. For more information, visit [mahec.net](#) and follow MAHEC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

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