



# Opioids and the Courts News: Dec. 5, 2017

## National

### [Court-mandated opioid rehab rarely meets medical standards](#)

Reuters

Fewer than one in 20 people with opioid addiction problems who are ordered into rehab programs by the courts receive methadone or buprenorphine, two drugs doctors consider the best treatment option, a U.S. study suggests.

Only 4.6 percent of people referred to opioid treatment programs by U.S. courts received methadone or buprenorphine, compared with almost 41 percent of patients outside the criminal justice system, researchers note in Health Affairs.

This disparity sets court-mandated rehab patients up for failure, said lead study author Noa Krawczyk of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore.

## National

### [Only One In Twenty Justice-Referred Adults In Specialty Treatment For Opioid Use Receive Methadone Or Buprenorphine](#)

Health Affairs

People in the US criminal justice system experience high rates of opioid use disorder, overdose, and other adverse outcomes. Expanding treatment is a key strategy for addressing the opioid epidemic, but little is known about whether the criminal justice system refers people to the highest standard of treatment: the use of the opioid agonist therapies methadone or buprenorphine. We used 2014 data from the national Treatment Episode Data Set to examine the use of agonist treatment among justice-involved people referred to specialty treatment for opioid use disorder. Only 4.6 percent of justice-referred clients received agonist treatment, compared to 40.9 percent of those referred by other sources. Of all criminal justice sources, courts and diversionary programs were least likely to refer people to agonist treatment. Our findings suggest that an opportunity is being missed to promote effective, evidence-based care for justice-involved people who seek treatment for opioid use disorder.



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## National

### [Kellyanne Conway chosen to lead Trump's opioid efforts](#)

Washington Examiner

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway has been chosen to lead President Trump's push to end the opioid crisis.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced Wednesday that the former pollster will supervise the White House's efforts to combat opioid addiction.

"The president has made this a White House priority," [Sessions said](#). "He's asked her to coordinate and lead the effort from the White House."

## National

### [Should opioids be banned in court over fears of exposure?](#)

ABC News

The potency of certain opioid [painkillers](#) has [Massachusetts'](#) judiciary considering whether to ban the substances from being brought into courtrooms as evidence — a move some experts say is driven by a misunderstanding of the real dangers.

The chief justice of the Massachusetts Trial Court recently told prosecutors that she fears allowing fentanyl and carfentanil into courtrooms puts lawyers, jurors and defendants at risk even when the drugs are properly packaged.

"Given their demonstrated potency and toxicity, the risk of accidental exposure, the training necessary to safely handle even though those samples that have been securely packaged as evidence, we believe a ban on these substances may be a necessary and reasonable measure," the Justice Paula Carey said in a letter.

## Michigan

### [Faced with addiction, drug court offers man escape from 'the madness'](#)

Flint Journal

Opioid overdose deaths in Michigan have [more than doubled](#) since 2012, according to state and federal data.

Genesee County's opioid prescription rate was [the third highest](#) in the state in 2015, a 46 percent jump from 2009, according to state data.

[Judge Mark] Latchana has seen it firsthand.

"Heroin and meth are way up," he said. "Every single person in drug court knows people that have died. I've gone to five funerals in five years."



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## Ohio

### [Opioids, High-Priced Bail Combine to Flood Ohio's County Jails](#)

WCSM Radio

Across Ohio, opioid addiction and pretrial detention stemming from unaffordable bonds have led to a dangerous jail overcrowding problem, advocates and corrections officials say.

An analysis of 83 inspections of county-operated jails found that 34 percent were overpopulated in 2016. More than a dozen jails were within ten inmates of being over capacity. The overcrowding problem plagues both urban jails, such as the Hamilton Justice Center near Cincinnati, and rural ones, including Allen County Jail near the northwestern Indiana border. Male and female populations are similarly affected. Opioids are often blamed for the large-share flood of low-level offenders in county jails, but they're certainly not the only cause.

## Pennsylvania

### [Pennsylvania courts rely on retired judges, specialty courts to handle caseloads](#)

Allentown Morning Call

[Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas President Judge Richard E.] McCormick said it appears the opioid crisis has increased the number of criminal cases the court handles. But McCormick said the extra work has been taken up mostly by Judges Megan Bilik-DeFazio and Christopher Feliciani, who oversee drug cases through a specialty drug court that focuses on drug treatment and frequent court follow-ups for nonviolent offenders.

## Wisconsin

### [Impact of opioid crisis plays out in another courtroom scene](#)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Another sentencing hearing Friday presented another tableau about the collateral damage left by the ongoing epidemic of opioid addiction, that claimed Erick Treu, 34, of Cudahy, one of nearly 300 such victims in Milwaukee County last year.

First, the prosecutor recounted the numbing statistics about overdose deaths — a count projected to rise to 380 this year in Milwaukee County alone.

Then Frederick Treu sat at the microphone. "I found my son's body," he said. "It was was really a," and he paused, choking up, "it's ah, something I'll have to live with."



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Melynda Treu, fighting through sobs, described how hard it's been to raise her younger brother's 7-year-old son "As much as we love him, we can't fix the hole in his heart," she said.