

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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National

[Substance Use Issues Are Worsening Alongside Access to Care](#)

KFF Health News

Substance use issues were a concern even before the [pandemic](#), yet many of those in need of care, particularly people of color, were not receiving treatment. In 2019, over [20 million](#) people over the age of 12 reported having a past year substance use disorder (SUD). However, only [10%](#) of these individuals reported receiving care. For those [individuals](#) with a past year SUD and an unmet need for treatment, 24% reported not knowing where to seek services and 21% reported not having health insurance and being unable to afford the cost.

Maryland

[More results, less politics: Blunting the opioid crisis in Maryland's rural communities / Commentary](#)

Baltimore Sun

Opioids also disrupt the basic socio-economic fabric of our families and communities. The economic consequences of the epidemic drain public and private capital away from other priorities. Opioid deaths diminish the labor force, reduce tax revenues and orphan children. Small town communities are often left to bear increased sheriff department costs, coroner medical examiner costs, treatment costs for the uninsured, foster care, court fees and hospital expenses for babies delivered with positive toxicology. When Maryland communities respond to the opioid crisis, their tax dollars are not used to build new schools, make broadband accessible or offer affordable housing.

Oregon

[Study: Shot of addiction medication boosts treatment satisfaction](#)

KATU

A new approach to treating opioid addiction comes with rousing results from patients in recovery, and Oregon's top treatment expert is weighing in on the benefits and barriers.

A new study detailed by the [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) explains that a longer-lasting form of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is improving treatment satisfaction for people battling a substance use disorder.

[Medication-assisted treatment](#) utilizes medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to treat substance use disorders and have been known to curb the cravings of an opioid, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) explained.

[Buprenorphine](#) is one of those prescription medications being utilized, known as an opioid partial agonist, though it's being reevaluated over how often it has to be taken.

South Carolina

[Drug court in SC expands to those who need prescription meds](#)

Associated Press

South Carolina prosecutor is expanding his alternative court for drug offenses to include people who have to regularly take prescribed medicine.

The newly qualified people will be in a three-month program limited to first time offenders with the least serious charges, 15th Circuit Solicitor Jimmy Richardson said in a statement.

The drug court has been one of the greatest tools prosecutors have to fight the opioid epidemic, with more than 550 people completing the program in its 16 years, Richardson said.

More than 90% of the drug court graduates are not arrested for another felony within a year of finishing the program, the prosecutor said.