



## Opioids and the Courts News: September 14, 2018

### National

#### [Nearly 30% of all opioid prescriptions lack medical explanation](#)

CNN

How large a role do doctors play in the opioid crisis? Nearly 30% of all opioids prescribed in US clinics or doctors' offices lack a documented reason -- such as severe back pain -- to justify a script for these addictive drugs, new research finds.

In total, opioids were prescribed in almost 809 million outpatient visits over a 10-year period, with 66.4% of these prescriptions intended to treat non-cancer pain and 5.1% for cancer-related pain, according to a [study](#) published Monday in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

### National

#### [USDA Partners with Communities to Support Opioid Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Opportunities in Rural America](#)

Department of Agriculture

Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is partnering with rural communities in 22 states to support [opportunities for opioid prevention, treatment and recovery](#) (PDF, 162 KB).

“With its impact on workforce, quality of life and the economic vitality of rural communities from Maine to California, the opioid epidemic is more than just a matter of public health – it is an issue of rural prosperity,” Hazlett said. “Under the leadership of President Trump, USDA is committed to being a strong partner to rural communities in planning and building local responses to this monumental challenge.”

### Maine

#### [Proposed drug court could help midcoast Maine battle opioid addiction](#)

WGME

Maine’s judicial branch is eyeing the midcoast as the future location of an expanded drug court that would offer an array of services to criminal defendants struggling with addiction.

District Attorney Jon Liberman said the possibility of a midcoast court dedicated exclusively to drug-related cases is still one to two years away. Establishing a drug court in the midcoast would also require the Legislature to appropriate \$750,000 to \$1 million for startup costs, according to Richard Gordon, coordinator of specialty dockets for the Maine Administrative Office of the Courts.



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## Maryland

[Drug court is wise step for county dealing with opioid crisis](#)

Herald-Mail Media

Special courts have proven effective in dealing with people from particular walks of life, from families to veterans. Similarly, drug courts might prove to be effective in helping those whose crimes stem directly from addiction.

Washington County has decided to join communities, including those in neighboring counties, that are hoping specialized courts can cut into a stubborn and deadly problem. Nonviolent offenders who stand before the bench facing a lengthy prison sentence are instead offered the chance to sign a contract committing to an intense regimen of treatment and supervision as they work to re-establish themselves as productive members of the community.

## Minnesota

[OUR VIEW: Localizing opioid crisis](#)

International Falls Journal

We may refer to “Minnesota’s opioid crisis,” but the crisis likely feels more local than statewide for the people who probably are most familiar with the many facets of the issue.

Those people are involved in the local court and probation system, child protection, health care and law enforcement to name just a few.

That’s why we say kudos to the Association of Minnesota Counties for playing host to the Minnesota County Opioid Summit in Alexandria...intended to share ideas and solutions.

## New Jersey

[Stockton creates scholarship program for Recovery Court grads](#)

Press of Atlantic City

[Luana] Cordeiro, 33, of Galloway Township, is the first recipient of a part-time scholarship, which she said will help her afford school while she works full time as an intake coordinator at Enlightened Solutions Detox.

University and court officials announced the new program Tuesday at the Superior Courthouse with more than 100 current Recovery Court participants in attendance.



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### West Virginia

[James Mazzone: Judiciary involves a team effort](#)

Herald-Star

The continuous abuse of opioid drugs by parents has created turmoil for their children and the court system, [1st Judicial Circuit Judge James P. Mazzone] said. Mazzone has presided over many cases in which he has been tasked at making a final ruling on someone's guilt or innocence. He said in making those decisions, he considers the effect on somebody's liberty and freedom, but also keeping the community safe.

