



Opioids and the Courts News: July 13, 2018

National

[Police leaders issue 10-point plan for opioid crisis response](#)

Addiction Professional

The 10 standards of care, which grew out of the May 3-4 meeting at the Police Executive Research Forum, call on law enforcement agencies to:

- Work with public health agencies toward the goal of reducing overdose deaths.
- Equip and train officers around the use of naloxone.
- Support public education to reduce stigma, and make addiction education part of officer training as well.
- Train officers to help people access treatment that offers all of the approved medications for opioid dependence.
- Advocate on-demand access to addiction treatment in their communities.
- Advocate access to medication-assisted treatment for incarcerated individuals and those under community supervision.
- Collaborate with local agencies that offer syringe service programs to prevent infectious disease transmission.
- Explore efforts to help individuals detect the presence of fentanyl in drugs.
- Work with community partners to explore the evidence around supervised consumption spaces as a public health strategy.
- Support consistent implementation of Good Samaritan laws that are designed to protect individuals who help an overdose victim.

National

[Sessions targets 10 areas in US for crackdown on the sale of fentanyl](#)

Washington Post

Attorney General Jeff Sessions on Thursday ordered federal prosecutors in 10 areas that have been especially hard-hit by overdose deaths from fentanyl to bring drug charges against anyone suspected of dealing the synthetic opioid, regardless of quantity.

An additional prosecutor will also be sent to each of the designated areas in Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maine, California and Pennsylvania as well as in New Hampshire, Sessions said.



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Alabama

[State health officer at opioid summit: 'I don't know of a bigger public health crisis'](#)

The Decatur Daily

“Opioids know no boundaries,” Morgan County District Attorney Scott Anderson said. There’s no “cookie cutter” resolution to the problem, he said. “We’ve got to do something that addresses each person as an individual.”

Programs in place for offenders are Drug Court and the Pre-Trial Intervention Program.

Drug Court, which is voluntary, lasts at least 12 months, and participants are required to get their GED and a job, Anderson said.

“It’s not an easy program,” he said. But, if someone successfully completes it, “We will dismiss that charge.”

Arkansas

[State Courts Partnership completes first year of operation](#)

Daily Record

In the fall of 2017, [the Conference of Chief Justices] CCJ and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) created the National Judicial Opioid Task Force. Gingerich serves as Senior Counsel to the Task Force. It is chaired by Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush. He provides research and assistance to the Executive Committee and is working closely with a work group responsible for education and collaboration issues. Meetings of the Task Force have taken place in Washington D.C. and Hendersonville, Nev., and the next meeting will take place in June in Indianapolis. The collaboration efforts involve outreach to state, federal, and tribal courts throughout the U.S. to examine those programs and resources already in place and to develop resources which respond to the specific needs of the state courts.

Part of his work involves the creation of a comprehensive survey of opioid litigation and legislation in each state. For that work, the NCSC, through the State Courts Partnership, has hired Bowen student Austin Waters.

“Austin’s work has been invaluable in this project,” Gingerich said. “Her national survey on opioid litigation will be published on the Judicial Opioid Task Force website, and she’s now gathering the information for the legislation survey.”

Gingerich has also developed a new course, “Therapeutic Justice” which he is teaching this summer at Bowen. The class uses the opioid crisis and judicial responses, including specialty courts, as the topic.



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Maine

[Top USDA official ends 5-state opioid awareness tour in Bangor](#)

Bangor Daily News

A top U.S. Department of Agriculture official wrapped up her [five-state tour](#) of rural places hit hardest by the opioid epidemic in Bangor, where on Monday she heard reports that Maine is still grasping for ways to battle the deadly crisis.

Anne Hazlett, assistant to the USDA's Secretary for Rural Development, moderated a discussion with 16 state and local officials before an audience of 150 at the Gracie Theater at Husson University. The panel included Independent U.S. Sen. Angus King, Republican U.S. Rep. Bruce Poliquin and Leigh Saufley, Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

Pennsylvania

[Courthouse doubles as counseling center for addicts in Sullivan County](#)

witf.org

In April 2017, A Better Today, a substance abuse treatment facility, opened a small office in the Sullivan County Courthouse at the behest of the county commissioners. The purpose was to encourage those in the court system for drug offenses to seek treatment.

"They were gracious enough to give us space in the courthouse to hold group therapy and individual therapy," said Dana Booth, A Better Today's regional director. "I started the office as a counselor and I would spend two days in Sullivan County to connect with other entities in the area to bring awareness to the community. I attended the courts as a presence and performed evaluations for the courts for individuals that have a drug or alcohol related incident. We started with individual counseling until we were able to have enough clients to form groups which are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings."

One of the biggest problems in Sullivan County, besides the addiction itself, is getting addicts into regimented care and getting a job that can provide stability.

Most of the clients A Better Today helps are assigned through the courts or Children and Youth Services, where they undergo an evaluation to determine the level of care that is needed based on factors such as their drug of choice, surrounding environment and level of motivation.



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Pennsylvania

[Cumberland County launched first intervention court in the state](#)

witf.org

In 2017, more than half of the people who died from a drug overdose in Cumberland County were actively involved in the criminal justice system, according to an analysis court and coroner's records conducted by The Sentinel.

Those numbers have risen sharply from just 20 percent of deaths in 2014, The Sentinel found.

This high crossover prompted Cumberland County to form a six-week, intensive opioid intervention court.

"The time from arrest to the time of eventual resolution of charges is very vulnerable and people were dying," said Cumberland County Common Pleas Judge Jessica Brewbaker, who runs the intervention court. "The point is to keep them alive. If you don't change things in their world, what are the chances they are going to change all on their own?"

Pennsylvania

[These innovative solutions to the PA opioid epidemic deserve a broader look \(Editorial\)](#)

PennLive.com

In Pottsville, [a Schuylkill County judge uses prizes and essays](#), employing a carrot-and-stick approach to successfully steer people through drug court.