

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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National

[Teva reaches proposed \\$4.35 billion settlement of US opioid lawsuits](#)

Reuters

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries on Tuesday announced a \$4.35 billion proposed nationwide settlement that could resolve thousands of lawsuits over the drugmaker's alleged role in the US opioid epidemic.

The proposal calls for Teva to pay up to \$3.7 billion in cash over 13 years and provide a company estimated \$1.2 billion worth of the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone.

US states, cities, and counties filed more than 3,000 lawsuits against opioid manufacturers, distributors and pharmacies, accusing them of downplaying their addiction risk and failing to stop pills from being diverted for illegal use.

National

[The next wave of opioid overdoses expected to be worse than ever before](#)

The Hill

More than [1 million Americans](#) have died from drug overdoses in the U.S. over two decades, and researchers predict a looming fourth wave of opioid overdoses will be deadlier than ever.

Researchers from Northwestern University [studied opioid-involved overdose deaths](#) from the past 21 years, which included three separate waves involving opioid painkillers, heroin, and illicit synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Their results showed the impending fourth wave is expected to hit all areas of the country from rural to urban cities. The spike in overdoses is the result of people combining synthetic and semisynthetic opioids with stimulants like cocaine and methamphetamines — a lethal combination that's hard to reverse during an overdose.



National[Senate Hearing on Fentanyl and Overdose Deaths](#)

C-SPAN

Executive branch officials testified at a Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee hearing on the continued rise of overdose deaths linked to fentanyl. Senators' questions centered around combating the illicit drug trade, with a focus on the manufacturing of fentanyl in China and distribution via Mexico and ports of entry; raising youth awareness about opioids; mental health and substance abuse programs; and the disproportionate number of overdoses among underserved populations.

National[The Rural Opioid Initiative Consortium Description: Providing Evidence to Understand the Fourth Wave of the Opioid Crisis](#)

Addiction Science & Clinical Practice

Results: Among 3,084 PWUD, 92% reported ever injecting drugs, 86% reported using opioids (most often heroin) and 74% reported using methamphetamine to get high in the past 30 days; 53% experienced homelessness in the prior 6 months; and 49% had ever overdosed. Syringe service program use varied by region and 53% had ever received an overdose kit or naloxone prescription. Less than half (48%) ever received medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD).

Conclusions: The ROI combines data across eight rural regions to better understand drug use including drivers and potential interventions in rural areas with limited resources. Baseline ROI data demonstrate extensive overlap between opioid and methamphetamine use, high homelessness rates, inadequate access to MOUD, and other unmet needs among PWUD in the rural U.S. By combining data across studies, the ROI provides much greater statistical power to address research questions and better understand the syndemic of infectious diseases and drug use in rural settings including unmet treatment needs.