

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

November 11, 2022



### National

#### [Black Robes and White Coats: Using Project ECHO to Increase Judiciary Knowledge about Substance Use Disorder](#)

SAMHSA's GAINS Center

Upcoming Webinar! Hosted by the [SAMHSA](#) GAINS Center on Monday, November 21st, 2022, from 2:30-4:00PM EST. *Black Robes and White Coats: Using Project ECHO to Increase Judiciary Knowledge about Substance Use Disorder*. High rates of substance use and overdoses among people interfacing with the criminal justice system have highlighted a need for judges to be more informed and aware of substance use disorders and optimal treatment approaches. Register [here](#).

### National

#### Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in the Criminal/Legal System: Knowledge, Beliefs, and Attitudes Among Rural Community-Based Stakeholders

Journal of Drug Issues

The aim of this study was to describe rural community stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions of providing medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) to individuals in the criminal/legal system.

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MOUD training was associated with endorsing the effectiveness of methadone, oral naltrexone, and injectable naltrexone. Three primary themes emerged from the stakeholder interviews: 1) acceptance of MOUD uptake; 2) stigma of MOUD and diversion concerns; and 3) gaps in MOUD treatment. Most interviewees noted that there is a scarcity of treatment options in their community, and among the existing services, there are considerable barriers to care.

### National

#### [Primary Purpose for Committing a Crime and Past-30 Day Opioid Misuse: A Statewide Sample of Justice-Involved Children](#)

Journal of Drug Issues

The prevalence of opioid misuse (OM) among justice-involved children (JIC) is significantly higher than children in the general population, yet little research has examined the predictors of OM among JIC. Goldstein's "economic compulsive model"

hypothesizes that JIC who commit crimes for material gain will have a higher likelihood of meeting past-30 day (P30D) OM criteria.

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Over 2000 JIC (2.67%) met P30D OM criteria and JIC who committed crimes for material gain were 2.55 times as likely to meet P30D OM criteria. Findings indicate that children may be incarcerated due to an inability to afford their addiction, contributing to the criminalization of mental health. JIC could benefit from the increased utilization of drug courts and the implementation of a cascade of care model.

### Maryland

#### [Lunch-break Burglar meets victim in drug court](#)

Fox 5 DC

Olden went to prison where he would spend about a decade behind bars.

“I have never spoken to him, except for the day of sentencing when I spoke in court,” Woodward [victim of robbery] explained Wednesday.

That is, until now. Both Olden and Woodward were back in court this week for a very different reason.

“I got a son that was born two days after my incarceration. I’m proud that he is able to see me here,” Olden told the crowd during his Montgomery County Drug Court graduation.

It was the final step in a rigorous program that takes at least 22 months to complete, and among other things, requires participants to hold down a job and maintain their sobriety.

### Minnesota

#### [Upon graduating from drug court, Ashley Petker reflects on her journey](#)

Southern Minnesota

Opioid use, such as Oxycontin, isn’t an uncommon way for people to become addicted to harder, more illicit drugs. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a 2008/2009 study of young heroin users found that 80% of them began with prescription opioid abuse.

When Petker’s ex-husband found out about her addiction, he took their kids and moved from Utah, where he and Petker were living, to Minnesota. That same day, Petker said she was arrested in Utah and charged with “six different felonies.”

Petker spent 19 months in the drug court and at her graduation, Nicole Grams, the drug court coordinator, said that she displayed a great deal of focus and drive. Petker attributes that focus to her kids, who she was getting sober for.

### North Carolina

#### [Vending machines dispensing free, life-saving medication](#)

North Carolina Health News

The [National Center for State Courts](#) provided the naloxone vending machines to detention centers in Buncombe, Cumberland, Forsyth, Guilford, Orange, Pitt and Wilkes counties at no cost. In addition to North Carolina, other states that are part of the [Regional Judicial Opioid Initiative](#) also received vending machines aimed at addressing overdose among justice-involved populations.

The [North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition](#) helped identify counties interested in installing vending machines in their county jails. The coalition used relationships with some jail officials and community groups formed through years of providing overdose prevention education, said Melissia Larson, the former law enforcement program manager at the coalition who helped with the vending machine placements before her departure in August.

### Virginia

#### [Drug treatment court seeks to keep offenders out of jails](#)

Henry County Enterprise

A new drug treatment court, a collaboration between the court system and Piedmont Community Services (PCS), is looking to take drug offenders out of the jails and into treatment. The court currently operates in Henry County with the goal of expanding into Martinsville and eventually Patrick County.

Kelly Koebel, Senior Assistant Director of Clinical Services at PCS, is the coordinator. She said there is a stark difference between treatment courts and traditional courts.

“Drug courts are specialty dockets that were approved by the Supreme Court, and the big difference between traditional courts and drug courts is that traditional courts are really about punishment for breaking a law. Treatment courts, the culture is different. We are focused on encouraging someone to succeed and treatment,” she said.