

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

October 16, 2020



Idaho

[Fighting the opioid epidemic in Idaho](#)

KIDK

In February, all five Idaho Supreme Court Justices and Governor Little signed an executive order to instate a new Idaho Behavioral Health Council. This council is a three-branch collaboration formed to study Idaho mental health and substance abuse. Although the council just started, the governor says because of their hard work and all of the steps they are currently taking, Idahoans can be encouraged that the problems we are facing with the opioid crisis will get better.

Illinois

[Supreme Court of Illinois Judicial College](#)

Supreme Court of Illinois

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 1 of 7

Introduction to Project ECHO

Monday, September 14, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 2 of 7

Opioid Use Disorders

Monday, September 21, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 3 of 7

Evidence Based Screening & Assessment

Monday, September 28, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 4 of 7

Evidence Based Outcomes

Monday, October 5, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 5 of 7

Medication for Opioid Use Disorders and the ADA

Monday, October 19, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 6 of 7

Polysubstance Abuse

Monday, October 26, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Project ECHO Judiciary Series – Module 7 of 7

Improving Long-Term Recovery in Special Populations

Monday, November 2, 8:00 – 9:00 am

Indiana

[Op-ed: In Indy area, COVID-19 has shut down very things people in addiction recovery need](#)

Indy Star

Joining me [Brandon George, vice president of Mental Health America of Indiana and director of the Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition] on the national panel discussion about the challenges of providing legal services during COVID-19 to those with opioid use disorders was Chief Justice Loretta Rush of the Indiana Supreme Court, a champion advocate for access to justice.

Chief Justice Rush and I both served on the Legal Services Corporation's Opioid Task Force, which in June 2019 issued its findings here. Among our recommendations: more frequent collaboration in which attorneys are embedded in health care settings to address the unmet civil legal needs of patients.

New Jersey

[County Forms Team to Study Opioid Overdose Deaths](#)

OCNJ Daily

Other partners committed to this effort include the Departments of Social Service and Human Services, Acenda (formerly Cape Counseling), Cape Assist, the Prosecutor's Office, Superintendent of Schools, Cape Regional Medical Center's CARES program, Drug/Recovery Court, local police departments and EMTs, faith-based organizations, and family members of those living with substance use disorder.

South Carolina

[Addiction is hard, recovery works](#)

Newberry Observer

Britton began taking opioids prescribed by his doctor at age 19 after sustaining a severe shoulder injury while serving in the Army.

"One day you're serving in the military. [Then, you] come home, and you're dealing with an injury," he shared.

In 2018, Britton was arrested, jailed, and referred to Veterans Treatment Court, a Veterans-only courtroom that provides an alternative to incarceration. He credits the structured therapy program with helping him get into and stay in recovery. Britton is now re-married, raising his children, and aspiring to accomplish his personal and professional goals. Britton hopes that his story can help illustrate the fact that opioid addiction can happen to anyone. He wants others facing this disease to know that help is out there and that there is a "light is at the end of the tunnel."

"You have to reach out for help. The recovery side of it is amazing. You get to a place where you're proud of yourself again."

Tennessee**[New Virtual Training Pilot Launched to Train Judges on Addiction Crisis](#)**

Tennessee Courts

A select group of judges from across the state and court system are immersed in a new innovative training and education regimen focusing on opioid addiction. Looking to better address addiction in their courtrooms, thirteen judges are taking part in a pilot Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) initiative, which will provide education on issues including the physiology of addiction, evidence-based programming interventions, and medication-assisted treatment. Originally developed for healthcare professionals, this is the first time Project ECHO is being used to train and educate judges. This venture is an initiative of the Appalachian/Midwest Regional Judicial Opioid Initiative (RJOI).

“When I saw a demonstration of Project ECHO, I knew this was exactly what our judges need,” said Judge Duane Slone, chair of RJOI and a circuit court judge in Tennessee’s 4th Judicial District. “This is hands-on, in-depth learning. Addiction has impacted every court in the state, and judges are in a position to positively impact many people struggling with addiction issues. Whether it is a criminal case, juvenile case, child custody case or other family law case, a judge has the authority to mandate behavioral health and addiction assessments and treatment. It is essential judges understand addiction and the assessment and treatment options. The ECHO learning platform will increase the competence and confidence of our judges to help people with substance use disorders, particularly opioid use disorders.”

Tennessee**[Blount County judge taking part in opioid addiction training](#)**

The Daily Times

A Blount County judge is part of a select group taking part in virtual opioid addiction training sessions.

General Sessions/Juvenile Court Judge Kenlyn Foster is among 13 judges chosen by Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Jeff Bivins to attend the training. Bivins made the decision after consultation with judicial branch leaders.

The pilot training, known as Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes), will educate the judges on issues including the physiology of addiction, medication-assisted treatment, and evidence-based programming interventions, a release states.

It is the first time the program, initially developed for healthcare professionals and in partnership with the East Tennessee State University Quillen College of Medicine, will be used to educate and train judges.