



Opioids and the Courts News: Nov. 14, 2017

Georgia

[Addiction & Childhood: Opioid addiction pushing more kids into foster care](#)

Moultrie Observer

DFCS doesn't track the specific type of substance being abused, but communications director Susan Boatwright said division officials hear anecdotally from local court officials and others that opioid abuse is driving many of these removals from the home.

Illinois

[Overdose calls becoming more frequent for first responders](#)

Rochelle News Leader

Ogle County Sheriff Brian VanVickle said the Supreme Court is mandating problem-solving courts, such as Veterans Court Program, drug court, or DUI court to address the underlying issues rather than just punishment with incarceration.

"We are seeing a shift to special courts to deal with specifics," VanVickle said. "This will help to figure out what the root cause is, and to get them help for their problem. In general, in problem-solving courts, after completion they typically don't have that charge on their record anymore. They can be successful members of the community and be able to provide for their families."

Kentucky

[A Southern Kentucky Judge Talks About The Economics of Incarceration](#)

WKU Public Radio

[Warren Circuit Court Judge Steve] Wilson said he's seen the popularity of certain drugs come and go during his years as a prosecutor and judge. When he started working in the legal system the focus was on heroin, followed by an emphasis on cocaine, methamphetamine and prescription opioids.

"And so after 35 years I'm right back to where we started, we're worried about heroin," he said.

Louisiana

[In Louisiana, is Medicaid expansion fueling the opioid crisis? That's hard to prove.](#)

New Orleans Times Picayune

The Edwards administration has also started [using Medicaid expansion to help provide treatment to prisoners with opioid addiction](#) after their release from state facilities. A number of Louisiana drug courts also leverage Medicaid expansion to make opioid-addiction treatment plans.



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Massachusetts

[Federal grant awarded to Franklin County Family Drug Court](#)

wwlp.com

Franklin County took a major step in the fight against the opioid epidemic.

Congressmen Richard Neal and Jim McGovern joined state and local officials to announce the launch of the “MISSION Hope Grant” at the Greenfield Courthouse. The \$2.1 million grant will enable the Franklin County Family Drug Court to help people in recovery over the next five years.

New Hampshire

[Jury still out on success of Felonies First as last counties make the switch](#)

The Union Leader

“To fully assess the impact of Felonies First, data sets from numerous stakeholders must be collected and analyzed. At this time, all relevant data is not even being captured. The council hopes to remedy this for future reports,” the council said.

The council also pointed out that the opioid crisis is “clouding the data and altering the criminal justice landscape.”

North Dakota

[State officials continually trying to tackle issues surrounding drug crimes](#)

Bismarck Tribune

“Most of us know once you put a felony on someone’s record they’re opportunity to advance in life becomes a lot more difficult,” [Sen. John Grabinger, D-Jamestown] said. “We were strapping a lot of people that really had addiction issues with felony counts. ... There’s a multitude of things that need to be done to address this but it really comes down to treatment and getting people the help that they need, giving judges the options they need to get these people the help rather than just locking them up.”

Ohio

[Grandparents affected by opioid crisis have court options with grandchildren](#)

Warren Tribune Chronicle

“This whole opioid crisis has had a ripple effect. Not just on the people who are addicted, but a ripple effect on the children to the grandparents and other family members. And so many parents have lost their child to this addiction, so whether your child is still living with addiction, or if you have lost your child to addiction, there are certain rights that grandparents have,” said Trumbull County Family Court Judge Sandra Stabile Harwood.



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Ohio

[Ohio Gives Drug Court Judges Access To Prescription Database](#)

WOSU

A state database meant to help keep doctors and pharmacies on the same page about the prescription of opioids and other drugs is getting some new users. The Ohio Board of Pharmacy said in a statement Tuesday that drug court judges will now have access to the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System, or OARRS.

West Virginia

[Interview with West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin: Opioid Crisis](#)

WJLA

I have a judge, I have a cousin of mine who is a judge. A first cousin, like a brother of mine. He said, “Joe, I have to sentence these people every day for the role they do. I’ve never been denied a jail cell but if someone comes and recommends this person did not commit a violent crime. This person did not commit a sexual crime. This person basically stole to support a habit. Addiction is an illness. Illness needs treatment. If illness needs treatment, then I need treatment centers. We recommend putting this person in a mandatory treatment center to see if we can cure them there because we know jail won’t do it. Guess what Joe? No treatment centers so I had to put them in jail.”