

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

July 21, 2023



### National

[‘Sesame Street’ characters to help children of defendants in Cook County drug court](#)

ABC 7

Elmo made an appearance in a Cook County courtroom Wednesday – sort of.

Elmo was seen in a “Sesame Street” video, titled “[How to Talk to Kids about Tough Topics.](#)”

Wednesday was training for drug treatment court and drug treatment personnel from All Rise with the help of videos from “Sesame Street” in Communities.

It’s a pilot program with three courts in the country, offering resources to help the children of defendants dealing with addiction and the criminal justice system.

### National

[Pilot Study: An Exploration of Medication Assisted-Treatment \(MAT\) for Indigenous Americans Within Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts](#)

Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice & Criminology

The interviews revealed several themes about MAT service availability and acceptability, integrating culturally responsive services into Tribal Healing to Wellness courts, and barriers and facilitators for treatment program participation. The data shows that the acceptance and availability of MAT are greatly influenced by the local community context in which the court is located. Adoption of MAT practices tends to lag in rural and remote communities mainly due to delays in research dissemination and policy reform (University of Michigan Behavioral Health Workforce Research Center, 2019). Thus, the misperceptions of MATs as “just another drug” or the perception of risk for increased medication diversion persist (Richard et al., 2020).

### Louisiana

[Participants graduate from Lafayette drug court program](#)

KLFY

A Lafayette drug court provided a new start for graduates who learned important tools in their quest to become drug free.

News 10 was at the district courthouse where the 15th JDC drug court program held their graduation today to explain how the program helps people overcome addiction.

Judge Valerie Garrett said, “For every family that’s behind a drug court participant, we’re healing somebody. And then we’re changing the trajectory of their future. So if we can keep doing that, then they can be the front-end soldiers to help us battle the opioid crisis.”

## **New Mexico**

### [Metro court introduces opt-in program to combat overdoses](#)

KOB 4

Opioid abuse is still a major problem, but the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court is taking a new approach to tackle that.

The state’s first opt-in program launched this week. The goal is to not only prevent opioid overdoses but also to prevent people from reoffending.

“I was blown away by how ignorant I was about the full breadth of this epidemic and how bad it is and how it’s gotten away from us,” Judge Claire McDaniel said. “People are dying in custody, out of custody. People are dying on the street, people are losing their loved ones.”

## **North Carolina**

### [‘We’re saving people’s lives’: Recovery court works to save money, improve lives](#)

Kingston Free Press

It was an arduous undertaking, learning to navigate the system. The judge said she learned much and credits the commissioners in Lenoir County with agreeing to be an applicant for what turned out to be the first monies secured. The funding allowed them to hire staff and build on the programming.

“It had always been a dream of mine to start the adult recovery court in addition to the family recovery court,” she said.

In 2018, FARC was chosen over a large pool of applicants to participate in the Blue Cross/Blue Shield/UNC School of Government Opioid Response Project grant. It provided two years of training and \$20,000 to learn the most effective ways to address opioid use in the community.

## **Pennsylvania**

### [Local counties start receiving opioid settlement funds](#)

Observer-Reporter

Other funding went to Good Works, a job skills training program that will help those in recovery prepare for employment (\$41,600) and Drug Court of Fayette County (\$35,000 annually).

In Pennsylvania, a 13-member oversight board is responsible for ensuring counties and local governments spend money appropriately.

## Washington

### [Stopping the Tri-Cities fentanyl crisis takes these priorities, leaders tell Cantwell](#)

Tri-City Herald

Success of drug court

[[Senator Maria Cantwell](#), D-Wash] said her goal was to hear directly from the people dealing with the crisis. She is working to put together a statewide task force to face down the crisis.

“This number of deaths and the really inexpensive access to fentanyl is what’s really hurting us,” Cantwell said. “We’ve seen success in the past in fighting both meth and opioids with new tools, but I feel like we keep cutting the head off the dragon only for it to come back bigger and more menacing.”

Cantwell said the larger purpose of the forums was to prompt discussion about how to streamline services and get people where they need to go, as well as how to stop the flow of fentanyl into the community.