

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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Indiana

THE OTHER PANDEMIC: As overdoses rise, leaders agonize over solutions

Greenfield Daily Reporter

One of the treatment measures that officials feel is paramount is the county's Drug Court program, [prosecutor Brent] Eaton said. Beth Ingle, the director of the program, said the success rate for participants is 52%.

While she noted the statistic may seem low, the figure is above the lowest average for the United States. Such programs generally have a success rate of 35% to 75%.

"We feel we are making real strides with our participants as we have reduced recidivism of our graduates by 65%," she said in an email to the Daily Reporter, referring to people who suffer relapses and wind up back in jail for drugs.

Ingle made it clear Drug Court is not a self-help program, but a very structured, highly monitored, court-ordered operation that works to hold offenders accountable.

"It may be voluntary to enter the program, but once an offender is in the program they have to follow our rules and stay drug- and alcohol-free," she said.

Indiana

Serving the young people in our area

Greenfield Daily Reporter

In Franklin County the work of the Opioid Task Force has changed the conversation about addiction in our schools and workplaces by raising awareness and reducing the stigma and shame associated with it. Additionally, they've brought millions of dollars into the area to support innovative, evidence-based programs in our courts, jails, and hospitals that utilize both medically assisted treatment (MAT) and effective alternative therapies. And their Community Grants program is a game changer for organizations like ours and many others serving the young people in our area.

New Jersey

[There's no vaccine for opioid use disorder. This is a battle we continue to fight. | Opinion](#)
NJ.com

Last February, we approved a pilot program to study how the availability of Fentanyl test strips would impact accidental overdoses. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid pain reliever that is extremely potent and deadly, and which is commonly making its way into heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine supplies without detection. Between 2015 and 2019, [66% of suspected heroin submissions](#) contained Fentanyl or a Fentanyl class compound.

We have pressed for treatment and medically assisted treatment above all else. Going back to 2014, we introduced [Operation Save a Life](#) (SAL), which doubled down on our bridge to detox and treatment, and we were the first county in the state to fund this service for our residents. Furthermore, we were the first jail in the state to offer medication-assisted treatment to everyone in our facility and upon release. The state Department of Corrections now funds most of this program for the county and uses it as a model for others.

West Virginia

[Teen Drug Courts Work. But Too Many West Virginians Don't Have Access To One](#)
West Virginia Public Broadcasting

Take Mingo County. Despite being one of the epicenters of the opioid epidemic (as well as media coverage of the crisis), the county doesn't have a teen treatment court.

Mingo has only one circuit judge, who would have to apply for, set up, and then preside over the brand new juvenile drug court in addition to her already-crowded docket.

And even if they established a teen drug court, the county lacks the other supporting services they need. There's no youth reporting center, and the treatment services for children are limited, according to [Teresa] McCune, who has served as a public defender and worked with children in the county for more than three decades.

In recent years, several of McCune's juvenile clients have been ordered by the court to complete drug counseling, but they have had to wait months to get appointments. Other times, a child's psychiatric evaluation will show that they are in need of intensive counseling, but the local services are only able to provide one appointment a month.

"I don't know if a mental health professional would consider that 'intensive counseling,' but it sure doesn't sound intensive to me," McCune said.

Wisconsin

[Substance abuse treatment centers discuss barriers of access](#)

Eagle Herald

There are various resources in Marinette County that offer services for individuals struggling with an addiction.

The [Treatment Drug Court](#), for instance, brings together the justice system and Health and Human Services professionals to provide treatment for substance-dependent offenders.

But the Treatment Drug Court program has eligibility requirements and capacity limits. Only individuals who have been convicted of a felony can be referred, and the court is currently at its maximum capacity, according to Treatment Drug Court Coordinator Sara Plansky-Pecor.

“I feel bad for the people on probation,” she said. “The people in the Drug Court have their needs met because we’re on them, but that’s not the case with people on probation.”