

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

September 8, 2023



National

[Viewing Then Doing?: Problem-Solving Court Coordinators' Perceptions of Medications for Opioid Use Disorders from a Nationally Representative Survey in the United States](#)

Substance Use & Misuse

Methods. A nationally representative survey of 849 local and 42 state [Problem-Solving Court] PSC coordinators in the U.S. was conducted to understand how coordinators' perceptions influenced MOUD utilization.

Results. Generally, court coordinators hold positive views of MOUDs, especially naltrexone. While state and local coordinators' views do not differ greatly, their stronger attitudes align with different aspects of and issues in PSCs such as medication diversion (i.e., misuse).

Conclusions. This study has implications for PSCs and their staff, treatment providers, and other community supervision staff (e.g., probation/parole officers, court staff) who can promote and encourage the use of MOUDs by clients.

National

[The interplay between women, opioid use disorder, medication-assisted treatment \(MAT\), and drug court: A qualitative study](#)

Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment

Four themes emerged from the analysis: (1) Women had more positive views toward the use of extended-release injectable naltrexone, as compared to methadone and buprenorphine; (2) Women reported fears about using MAT to treat their opioid use disorders because they felt it could negatively impact their housing, where they were able to receive substance use disorder and mental health treatment, and their ability to maintain custody of their children; (3) Women reported histories of oppression, mainly trauma, and shared that, in some situations, they were not comfortable disclosing they were using or considering using MAT because of further oppressions they may experience; and (4) Women reported that the use of a non-adversarial approach by the judge, consistent with key component two of the drug court model, helped minimize their concerns related to the use of MAT and gave them a safe place during status hearings to discuss their opioid use disorder treatment and recovery. Implications for

drug court practice and criminal justice reform are discussed, such as promoting access to housing and treatment for women who use MAT to treat their opioid use disorders and creating safe, anti-oppressive environments to promote recovery for female participants.

Florida

[Chief Justice Muñoz proclaims September Opioids and Stimulants Awareness Month](#)

Florida Bar News

Substance use disorders and overdoses resulting from the use and misuse of opioids and stimulants are taking an enormous toll on the lives of millions across the state and nation. The surge in drug overdoses and overdose deaths from opioids and stimulants has resulted in an urgent public health crisis, with over 150 people dying every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids alone, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

For these reasons, Supreme Court Chief Justice Carlos Muñoz signed a proclamation stating, “September 2023 shall be known within the State Courts System as a month of awareness, training, and action regarding opioids, stimulants, and substance use disorder treatment and recovery.”

Florida

[Flagler County residents walk over the bridge in recognition of Overdose Awareness Day](#)

Observer News

Some participants walked over the Flagler Beach bridge in recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31 to celebrate their years in recovery. Others walked in memory of loved ones who lost their lives to overdoses.

The Flagler County Drug Court Foundation sponsored the event, which began at Wadsworth Park and ended with a gathering of more than 30 across the bridge at Veterans Park.

New York

[County officials: ‘We are here to help’](#)

River Reporter

LETI is the latest step in this direction. Since 2017, Wayne County has also offered a Drug & Treatment Court, which involves monitored rehabilitation to eligible residents who would otherwise be facing jail time. The program takes 18 to 36 months to complete. Melinda Card, the court’s coordinator, said it takes that lengthier period to find the underlying struggles the individual is working through that have led to their substance use disorder.

“We can kind of separate the addiction from mental health or trauma, and successfully address not just the addiction, but also the underlying mental health issue or trauma issue,” Card said. “You can get someone through a program motivated by getting out of jail, motivated by getting their charges dropped. But once you remove those external motivations, if those internal issues aren’t resolved, they’re more likely to go back to what was effective for them before.”

Because it takes a while to get through—and with COVID-19 slowing things down—there’s not a very large sample size. So far, however, drug court is proving highly successful in Wayne County. Of the 31 graduates since 2017, only one person has been reincarcerated.