

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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Florida

[‘A Failed Model Ends Today,’ Recovery Pioneer Says in Flagler Launch of New Drug Treatment](#)

Flagler Live

Drug courts in Flagler and elsewhere, like jails and prisons, continue to be filled with participants who’d fit [Dr. Kenneth] Scheppke’s definition of diseased addicts, not criminals. (Scheppke credited the governor for signing legislation that enhances penalties for “these people that are pushing this deadly drug fentanyl on our society.”)

But Scheppke is a doctor, not a policymaker. He was in Flagler to describe the innovative addiction treatment system he developed, explaining it with an analogy to the EMS system. Take a car crash victim. That victim would be taken to a hospital by ambulance, treated, then handed off to a rehabilitation facility. “That model is a proven successful model,” he said, “and every time we have copied that model, which we’ve done for heart attacks, we’ve done for strokes, and certainly we’ve done for trauma, every time we’ve seen a drop in the death rates, dropping the morbidity rates.”

New Hampshire

[New Hampshire county attorneys hold a lot of power, but most run unopposed](#)

NH Business Review

Specifically, Buckey [public defender] said he would push for Sullivan County to open a drug court — an alternative to prison that involves court-supervised treatment and behavioral therapy for people whose offenses are linked to an addiction. Sullivan is the only county in New Hampshire without one.

Hathaway, the county attorney, has also seen the damage drugs have caused in his community and believes rehabilitation is important. But he doesn’t think drug courts impose enough accountability when people reoffend or continue to use. He said that undermines public safety.

“Unfortunately, drug court turns out to be a very forgiving entity, far more forgiving than something should be in the criminal justice system, when you’re dealing with the high-risk, high-need offenders that drug court services,” he said.

New Jersey

[NJ Launches New ‘Drug Court’ Program At 6 Sites, Including East Orange](#)

Patch.com

What is Opt for Help and Hope all about? Here’s what state prosecutors said about the program which is being funded with proceeds from the attorney general’s settlement with a company allegedly involved in the false advertisement of opioid products:

The goals of the program are to offer early intervention for defendants whose offenses are non-violent, to help establish additional pathways to recovery that saves lives, and to minimize the deleterious impact that arrests and convictions can have on the stability needed to sustain recovery. Throughout New Jersey, the existing Recovery Court Program (formerly known as the Drug Court Program) assists defendants in overcoming alcohol and other drug dependencies while resolving related criminal charges. The Recovery Court Program is focused on non-violent drug-related cases in Superior Court which generally handles more serious criminal charges. By expanding the addiction support services available to municipal court, Opt for Help and Hope will assist individuals experiencing substance use disorder before their drug-related conduct escalates to the kind of more serious criminal conduct that is prosecuted in Superior Court. Opt for Help and Hope is the first statewide initiative focused on offering support services for substance use disorder to municipal court defendants.

North Carolina

[Bladen County’s plan for opioid settlement money has been in the works for years](#)

Border Belt Independent

In addition, the county is applying for grants from Trilium for medication lock boxes and Vivitrol, which is a substitute for Suboxone, for residents without insurance. Both drugs are FDA-approved medications that help decrease the withdrawal symptoms.

[Syd Wiford, principal consultant at ACT Associates] said there have been discussions about a shared drug court between Bladen and Columbus counties, but nothing concrete has happened.

“We thought having these strategies that really impact people on a day-to-day basis was more important at this time than putting more money into the criminal justice end of things,” Wiford said. “There’s nothing – nothing – that’s available to Bladen County without the ability to do interventions or have a place for people to go to treatment.”