



Opioids and the Courts News: Oct. 31, 2017

National

[Court To Rule On Whether Relapse By An Addicted Opioid User Should Be A Crime](#)

NPR

Ten days later, Eldred was released from jail when her lawyer found a bed in a residential treatment facility. That lawyer — Lisa Newman-Polk — brought Eldred's case to Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, arguing that the courts should not punish people for having the disease of addiction.

"This idea that a court can order a person to stop using — with the threat of punishment — is not grounded in reality," Newman-Polk says. "If it worked to punish people for addiction and relapse we would have a cured nation."

Newman-Polk argues that courts should take into account scientific research about addiction, and apply it in practice — much as courts have done with the science about brain development and juvenile offenders. She says addiction is a medical condition, so it's unconstitutional to incarcerate someone for relapsing — because that's part of the disease.

National

[Drug Court a Lifeline in Battle Against Opioid Addiction](#)

Voice of America

Coles' case is one of hundreds Cohen has seen during the unfolding prescription opioid and heroin epidemic in South Florida. Inside her courtroom, with graphic photos of what drugs can do to the body, she surrounds herself with professional caseworkers on the frontlines of how America's criminal justice system handles the boom in opioid abuse.

Miami-Dade County launched the nation's first drug court in 1989. Today there are 3,000 U.S. drug courts serving 136,000 people. But a report by Physicians for Human Rights claims few communities have adequate treatment facilities and the criminal justice objectives of drug courts often overrule the medical need of the patient.

National

[From Teddy Roosevelt to Trump: How drug companies triggered an opioid crisis a century ago](#)

Washington Post

The United States developed a pernicious narcotics habit in the decades after the Civil War. Anguished veterans were hooked on morphine. Genteel "society ladies" dosed up with Laudanum — a tincture of alcohol and opium. The wonder drug was widely used as a cough suppressant and it proved very effective at treating diarrhea in children.



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National

[Trump says this can be generation that ends opioid epidemic](#)

The Hill

President Trump called the opioid epidemic the "worst drug crisis" to strike the U.S. in its history on Thursday while declaring a public health emergency.

"Nobody has seen anything like this going on now. As Americans, we cannot allow this to continue," Trump said at a White House ceremony alongside advocates and his wife, Melania.

"It is time to liberate our communities from this scourge of drug addiction. ... We can be the generation that ends the opioid epidemic. We can do it," he said to long, thunderous applause.

It's a move that won't free up much additional federal funding but will allow acting Health and Human Services Secretary Eric Hargan to loosen certain regulations that he otherwise would not be able to.

Georgia

[Fayette panel says opioid epidemic has arrived here](#)

The Citizen.com

...the meeting's panel included drug court participant Amanda Williamson, Griffin Circuit Drug Court Administrator Donna Michel...

Georgia

[Opioid crisis gets personal for judge who helped troubled youth](#)

Atlanta Journal Constitution

Despite a history of helping troubled youth, former judge Maurice Hilliard couldn't save his grandson.

Indiana

[Indiana's controversial plan to keep opioid addicts out of jail or cemetery](#)

Indianapolis Star

Stories such as Winn's — and specifically the need for addicts to receive treatment — is the rationale behind a new law that gives public safety officials and health professionals in three counties authority to use of the state's civil commitment proceedings to order people with life-threatening opioid-abuse disorders into inpatient or outpatient treatment facilities.



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The three-year pilot programs, which are still in their development stages, require Marion, Tippecanoe and Wayne counties to record their outcomes, including the number of patients who successfully recover under the program, the patient relapse rate and a summary of the most effective services.

Indiana isn't alone. Involuntary commitment laws in at least 30 states allow people with substance abuse disorders to be ordered into treatment, USA TODAY reported in August.

Kansas

[City to approve 500K in drug court grant money](#)

KWCH

The third part would give Drug Court participants access to FDA-approved opiate agonist medications (e.g. buprenorphine) for the maintenance treatment of opiate use disorder and opiate antagonist medication (e.g. naltrexone) to prevent relapse to opiate use.

Doctors would administer medications like subutex and vivitrol. Two drugs that are used to prevent drug relapse.

Medication-assisted treatment would be used for up to 20 people. It is reserved for active Drug Court participants that test positive for heroin, opioids, and/or alcohol, or participants who continue to demonstrate cravings and/or a need for maintenance/relapse treatment.

Kansas

[Reno County drug court sees success](#)

Hutchinson News

Thompson, who also serves as the drug court coordinator, said on average about 70 percent of the 32-person caseload used opioids at some point. That number represents a constant rise since drug court started.

McCarville was one of the first people on board to start drug court. He said it was to address the methamphetamine problem. Opioids soon became a big problem as well.

"There's no magic bullet to stop the opioid epidemic," he said, adding it has taken longer to reach Kansas than other places.



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Minnesota

[Opioids hot topic at Ely drug forum](#)

The Ely Echo

Lundquist said she has seen how opioid addiction hits every part of a person's life. A new "drug court" has been set up to give someone intensive support instead of sending them to jail in hopes they don't re-offend.

She said oftentimes if people can't get pain pills they turn to heroin and that offenders are often young people.

"I always tell parents we're not trying to make criminals out of kids, we're just trying to get them on the right track," said Sundquist.

The courts and the jails are clogged with drug offenders.

New Hampshire

[NH speaks: How to win the opioid fight](#)

The Union Leader

Laconia Police Chief Matthew Canfield says it will take a multi-pronged approach to address the crisis, including treatment, law enforcement and drug courts.

New York

[NYS Supreme Court judge addresses Victor-Farmington Rotary](#)

MPNnow.com

New York State Supreme Court Justice Craig Doran recently spoke at a dinner meeting hosted by Victor-Farmington Rotary Club.

Doran titled his presentation "All You've Ever Wanted to Know About Our Court System — and Were Afraid to Ask."

Numerous issues concerning the current opioid epidemic were discussed in response to questions from Rotarians. Doran said the problem is serious, and Ontario County is not immune from the nationwide problem. He said there have been approximately 30 cases of drug overdose deaths in the county in 2017.



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North Carolina

[Religious leaders trained to address opioid epidemic](#)

WECT-TV6

"Often when people are in need they seek a spiritual guidance," said Ola Lewis, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge. "We're just hopeful that this training will help those individuals who lead their churches help their congregations."

Ohio

[Akron, Barberton judge candidates point to drug abuse as most pressing issue](#)

Akron Beacon Journal

The eight candidates in contested races for Akron and Barberton judge may not see eye-to-eye on everything, but they agree that one of the most serious issues facing the courts is drug abuse.

"The opioid/drug addiction epidemic continues to be the most pressing issue," said Nicole Walker, a probate magistrate and candidate for Akron Municipal Court judge. "There is no room in the jail for other offenders."

Ohio

[DeWine says 'Ohio is in crisis' as he announces 12-step plan to battle opioids](#)

ABC6OnYourSide.com

Create at least 60 more specialized drug courts.

Ohio

[Opioid Summit invites public for input on drug epidemic solutions](#)

WFMJ

"So many people have so many misconceptions about what is addiction and who are the people and what are they like," said Theresa Dellick, Mahoning County Juvenile Court Judge.

Pennsylvania

[New Butler County family drug court is about support, encouragement](#)

Hamilton Journal News

In the wake of the opioid epidemic that has a firm grip on Butler County, and with many adoptions occurring because of parents who can't stay off drugs, Children Services, the



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Juvenile Court and mental health and addiction board decided to resurrect the family drug court that was stopped in 2012 when funds dried up.

West Virginia

[Statewide drug epidemic hitting too close to home](#)

Mountain Statesman

Bord reported that there are approximately 105 felony cases in Taylor County Circuit Court, and that nearly 85-90 percent of those have a drug component. He further revealed that there are approximately 102 abuse and neglect cases, and of those cases, another 85-90 percent of them have drug components.