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RESEARCH & REPORTS

“EXPECTED TO HAPPEN”: PERSPECTIVES ON POST-RELEASE OVERDOSE FROM RECENTLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE WITH OPIOID USE DISORDER

Opioid-related overdose is the leading cause of death for people recently released from incarceration. However, treatment with medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) during incarceration can reduce the mortality risk. This study analyzes perceptions of post-release overdose risk from the perspectives of people who received MOUD while incarcerated in one of eight Massachusetts jails to identify factors that may contribute to or protect against post-release overdose risk. Participants were recruited from jails in urban, suburban, and rural counties, offering varying forms of FDA-approved MOUD.

WHEN MEDICATION TREATMENT FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER GETS DISRUPTED BY EXTRA-CLINICAL VARIABLES, HOW SHOULD CLINICIANS RESPOND?

Structural and systemic discrimination against people with substance use disorder is pervasive. Clinicians caring for patients receiving medications for opioid use disorders (MOUDs) should plan for possible disruptions of treatment caused by arrests and pretrial confinement in jails. This case commentary suggests that harm caused by such treatment disruption can be mitigated by clinicians who take some of the practical approaches outlined in this commentary to preserve better continuity of care for people receiving MOUD.



FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO ADOPTING OR EXPANDING MEDICATIONS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER PROVISION IN RURAL COLORADO JAILS: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Opioid use disorder (OUD) is common among individuals who are incarcerated. However, OUD treatment services are sparse in smaller county jails found in many rural areas, which limits a healthy and supportive jail environment. This study assesses the facilitators of and barriers to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) adoption or expansion in rural Colorado jails. A qualitative descriptive design was implemented during the summer of 2022 using semi-structured interviews with jail staff, sheriffs, and contracted personnel. Interview questions focused on facilitators of existing MOUD services and barriers to adopting or expanding services.



“I DON’T THINK THAT A MEDICATION IS GOING TO HELP SOMEONE LONG-TERM STAY OFF OPIOIDS”: TREATMENT AND RECOVERY BELIEFS OF RURAL VERMONT FAMILY MEMBERS OF PEOPLE WITH OPIOID USE DISORDER

Few studies have addressed beliefs about treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD) among family members of people with OUD, particularly in rural communities. This study examined the beliefs of rural family members of people with OUD regarding treatment, including medication for OUD (MOUD) and recovery. Four primary themes related to beliefs about OUD treatment emerged:

1. MOUD is another form of addiction or dependency and should be used short-term
2. Essential OUD treatment components include residential and mental health services and a strong support network involving family
3. Readiness as a precursor to OUD treatment initiation
4. Stigma as an impediment to OUD treatment and other health care services

PROGRAM

THE PROMISING PROGRAM KEEPING YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM IN HAWAI`I

The Teen Court program in Kauai, Hawai`i, is a partnership between Hale `Ōpio Kaua`i, the local school system, the courts, the mayor, and the Kaua`i Office of the Prosecuting Attorney (OPA). Kaua`i is a small, rural community of just over 70,000 people. The program has diverted hundreds of young people from criminal prosecution and supported them in avoiding future involvement with the criminal legal system. So far, the program, built upon a host of other support programs Hale `Ōpio offers, has successfully guided its participants toward positive outcomes: Vera's preliminary findings of an ongoing evaluation show that just 3.4 percent of participants between March 2020 and April 2023 were charged with new cases within a year of entering the program.



WEBINAR

BUILDING A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM OF CARE: THE ROLE OF RURAL LEADERS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

August 22nd, 2024, 2-3 p.m.

To build an effective and robust behavioral health system, counties need strong leadership to promote dialogue in the community and implement programs and policies that benefit all residents. This webinar will highlight two local leadership roles: leaders in rural and frontier communities and behavioral health (BH) directors. Attendees will engage in a panel discussion with representatives of these roles to learn how rural and frontier leaders and BH directors can identify solutions and cultivate support for sustainable, accessible behavioral health care. [Register Here.](#)

RESOURCES

RURAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

Rural communities face unique challenges that impact their ability to deliver fair and equitable justice. Despite these challenges, rural communities rely on their many strengths to address the needs of their residents.

The National Center for State Courts, in partnership with Rulo Strategies, launched the [Rural Justice Collaborative \(RJC\)](#) to showcase the strengths of rural communities and highlight the cross-sector collaboration that is a hallmark of rural justice systems.

The work under the RJC is supported by a cross-sector advisory council composed of rural judges along with additional stakeholders in the justice, child welfare, and behavioral health systems. The advisory council guides and identifies innovative programs and practices.

INCORPORATING PEER SUPPORT INTO SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT SERVICES

This Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) provides guidance on incorporating peer workers and their services into SUD treatment and supportive programs. It also discusses how SUD treatment providers and program administrators can collaborate with community-based PSS and successfully link individuals and families to these services to support ongoing recovery from SUDs, including specific considerations related to providing peer support in rural areas.

TREATMENT AND RECOVERY FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING PEOPLE: A NACO OPIOID SOLUTIONS STRATEGY BRIEF

Even though MOUD is the standard of care, many pregnant and parenting people cannot access MOUD through existing healthcare infrastructures. In addition, pregnant and parenting people with OUD may avoid the healthcare system out of justified concerns about child welfare involvement and the risk of losing their children. Effective treatment for pregnant and parenting people means expanding access to MOUD and adopting a family-centered approach that prioritizes keeping families together. One of the best practice recommendations is supporting access to MOUD in rural or underserved areas by promoting telehealth, mobile clinics, and other innovative approaches to serve pregnant and parenting people.

RURAL PEER HOUR

Rural Peer Hour is facilitated by JBS Technical Expert Lead Donald McDonald, a person thriving in sustained recovery from severe mental and substance use disorders. These live Zoom sessions are on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 4:00 p.m. ET. The Rural Peer Hour is a dedicated space where peer recovery support specialists can network and have informal discussions with their fellow rural professionals nationwide. Click "[Register Now](#)" to register for the event. You will receive an email confirmation with a Rural Peer Hour session link.

ARTICLES

PAIN AND PROGRESS THROUGH A RURAL LENS: COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION BEYOND URBAN AMERICA

Community Violence Intervention (CVI), an approach to quelling crime and supporting people who may be victims of, or likely to commit, violent crime (or both), emerged in America's urban neighborhoods. It is also practiced across rural America, sometimes in forms that vary distinctly from city-based CVI. Rural practitioners participated in a panel discussion on what CVI looks like outside urban centers at a recent conference in Chicago sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), together with LISC. The session, organized by LISC Safety & Justice team's John Connelly, was part of a gathering of primarily urban grantees in the DOJ's Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI).



BREAKING THE CYCLE: PILOT PROGRAM AIMS TO KEEP RURAL ACADIANA RESIDENTS OUT OF PRISON

According to data compiled by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, nearly half of those leaving prison in Louisiana return within five years. Those with multiple past convictions tend to return more quickly and at higher rates. Local social and economic support can prove life-changing for those reentering society after prison. This article describes a new anti-recidivism program focused on rural communities.



Photo by Alena Maschke

PODCASTS

RURAL ROADS- THE RCORPODCAST: ADVENTURES IN RECOVERY (AIR) INITIATIVE



Adventures in Recovery (AIR) of Cattaraugus County is a community of sober individuals dedicated to providing a safe, fun, and welcoming space for those in recovery to connect with peer support through adventure, wellness, and exciting sober events. It was built by peers for peers, their families, and those within the community who choose to live healthy, sober lives. Project Director Katie Connors joins the podcast to discuss how it started, what they do, and where the program is heading.

JUST OUTREACH TEAMS FOR SUBSTANCE USE IN RURAL NEVADA

In episode six of the Community-based Solutions for Substance Use Challenges season, Just Science talks with Dr. Terry Kerns, Substance Abuse Law Enforcement Coordinator of the Nevada Office of the Attorney General, Dr. Katie Snider, owner of Justice Research LLC, and DJ Mills, Director of Mental Health and Deflection Programs at the Nye Communities Coalition, to discuss their COSSUP-funded MOST and FASTT programs, which help bridge the gaps between law enforcement and social services in rural Nevada.

To address the needs of justice-involved individuals with a substance use disorder, there are several opportunities for intervention, including pre-arrest, at the time of a behavioral health crisis, and post-arrest, once an individual has already been incarcerated. In rural Nevada, the Office of the Attorney General has pioneered two types of outreach teams, which help support individuals at both points in their involvement with the criminal justice system. Listen along as Dr. Kerns, Dr. Snider, and DJ discuss how Mobile Outreach Safety Teams, or MOST, and Forensic Assessment Service Triage Teams, or FASTT, operate, the state and local impact of these programs, and how grantees have overcome implementation barriers.

[Introductions end, and program discussion begins at 7min]