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Health Care : A Public Safety Opportunity

Across the country, criminal justice and health practitioners, administrators, and policymakers are implementing innovations aimed at fulfilling the promise that health reform holds for justice-involved populations: better access to services that will result in safer and healthier communities. The hope is that newly available coverage of primary care and addiction and mental health treatments can translate into decreased crime, fewer jail and prison admissions, and reduced recidivism among justice-involved individuals who have never before had this level of access to services. To promote these outcomes, the Bureau of Justice Assistance is partnering with the Legal Action Center (LAC) and associates, Advocates for Human Potential and TASC, Illinois, to offer technical assistance to justice professionals. As part of this work, LAC and its partners are launching the *Justice & Health Innovation Bulletin*, a monthly newsletter that will keep readers informed about resources and opportunities to increase public safety through improved access to health care. The Bulletin fosters an exchange of information between professionals, highlights federal health and criminal justice policy developments, and responds to the technical assistance needs of practitioners with the program and policy expertise a shifting health care landscape requires.

Spokane Municipal Community Court

Each month, we will feature a justice program that is taking advantage of health reform to improve public safety and justice outcomes. This month we profile the Spokane Municipal Community Court in Washington State.

Spokane Municipal Community Court is a great example of a front-end effort to leverage behavioral health intervention and treatment into crime prevention for affected communities. Spokane Community Court defendants get an opportunity to resolve their misdemeanor criminal charges without jail time or criminal conviction, and receive help with health benefit enrollment and connections to covered services. Indicators suggest these measures can improve the health of vulnerable populations and prevent a cycle of repeat court appearances and jail stays. Communities with high unmet needs for addiction and mental health services are often plagued by a steady stream of individuals passing through a revolving door in and out of custody. It all started when Municipal Court leaders, police, public defenders and prosecutors began talking with local hospitals about the needs of homeless individuals living downtown. [Full text](#)



Community service for Prosecutor Papini, Public Defender Adewale and Court participants

Where to Find It: Quick Links to Health Care Information

This regular feature points readers to key information resources for Affordable Care Act implementation. These 'staff picks' direct you to resources on enrollment and linkage to care, and show where to find data specific to your state.

HRSA - Find a Center

Enter any U.S. address to find Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) within 10 miles.

FQHCs all over the U.S. assist with benefit enrollment, accept Medicaid and other health coverage, and can help link people with mental health and substance use disorders to services.

National Academy For State Health Policy - PCMH Initiative

A U.S. map and state listing of patient-centered medical home and health home plans.

Health Homes allow patients with chronic behavioral health and other health conditions to receive better coordinated care.

CMS – From Coverage to Care

Educational materials; infographics; series of short videos that explain how to use benefits.

Many justice-involved individuals may have never had insurance coverage before, and need to know which services are covered and how to access them.

CONTACT US

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[State Medicaid & CHIP Policies for 2014](#)

A U.S. map which links to key state-specific documents and information about the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid/CHIP changes to states' programs.

If you click on your state, you will receive information about your state's Medicaid program, including covered benefits and providers.

[Healthcare.gov – Find Local Enrollment Help](#)

A window to enter any city, state or zip code and find local personal enrollment help.

Anyone can use this local contact, not just new enrollees. Staff can get information on behalf of clients, or refer clients for help with enrollment.

Ask us About –Tell us About

Each month the Health & Justice Innovation Bulletin offers readers the opportunity to submit their questions to our TA team and to share successful implementation strategies with other jurisdictions.

If you have a question that you would like our technical assistance team to answer, you can use the “ask us about” button to the left to go to the submission page. A member of the TA team will then be in touch. To see our first set of fourteen FAQs and answers on health care reform implementation issues particularly important to the criminal justice system, follow the link: [FAQ List](#). The list will be updated monthly and will include answers to your newly submitted questions. We are equally interested in learning about your successes and innovations. You can use the “tell us about” to enter information about you program or facility and tell us about what you are doing to take advantage of what health care can offer to the justice population you serve. We hope to profile new and innovative efforts at all points of the justice continuum and share questions and answers with our readers.

Policy Watch

Each month Policy Watch features updates and new guidance on federal policies, key federal agency reports, and Congressional actions affecting health care and public safety.

[SAMHSA Convenes Public Listening Session on Rules Governing Confidentiality](#) of alcohol and drug records: SAMHSA held a public listening session on Wednesday, June 11, 2014, to solicit information concerning the Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records Regulations, 42 CFR Part 2. Follow the link above for a webcast of the public listening session. For more about the session visit the Federal Register notice: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/05/12/2014-10913/confidentiality-of-alcohol-and-drug-abuse-patient-records>

[National Drug Control Strategy Released by ONDCP](#): On July 9th, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) released its annual National Drug Control Strategy. The strategy serves as a blueprint for reducing drug use and its consequences.

[Informational Bulletin on Medication Assisted Treatment for Substance Use Disorders](#) issued by CMS and Other Federal Health Officials: On July 11th, Cindy Mann, Director of CMS's Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, and the Directors of the CDC, SAMHSA, NIDA, and NIAAA, jointly issued an Informational Bulletin with guidance on medication assisted treatment for SUD. It identifies approved medications and successful treatment strategies that are used in combination, advises state Medicaid agencies on managing medication-assisted treatment, and identifies related resources.

[Technical Assistance Program with Substance Use Disorder Focus](#) launched by CMS: On July 14th, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the Medicaid Innovation Accelerator Program. This new CMS technical assistance project will have a specific focus on reducing substance use disorders by supporting delivery system innovations. CMS will provide technical assistance to states to accelerate the development and testing of SUD service delivery innovations through the program.

[Final Report on Behavioral Health Data Exchange Project](#) released by ONC: In June, the Office of National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) released a final report for their State Health Policy Consortium Project on Behavioral Health Data Exchange.

[Final Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act \(MHPAEA\) Rule](#) becomes effective for certain commercial plans: On July 1st, final regulations to implement the federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) became effective for certain plans. MHPAEA requires certain private and public health plans to cover mental health and substance use disorder benefits in no more restrictive a way than they cover other medical and surgical benefits. Visit: <http://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/sho-13-001.pdf> for CMS guidance to state Medicaid directors on the application of the federal parity law for certain Medicaid plans. For a set of Frequently Asked Questions on the federal mental health and addiction parity law visit: http://lac.org/doc_library/lac/publications/November_2013_Parity_FAQs_copy.pdf

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QUESTIONS

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TELL US ABOUT

NOVEMBER ISSUE

PROFILES
ENROLLMENT
EFFORTS INSIDE JAILS
AND PRISONS

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