

December 5, 2024



**DC Update: NASADAD Attends Congressional Briefing on Second Chance Act Program, SAMHSA Releases Updated Federal Guidelines for OTPs, NIH Releases Overdose Crisis Community Decision Tool, and More.**



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## Meet the Member

### **Katherine Coutu-Farrell, State Opioid Treatment Authority (SOTA) for Maine**

Katherine Coutu-Farrell currently serves as Division Manager of the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Division at the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) within the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. She also serves as the State Opioid Treatment Authority (SOTA) for Maine, a position she has held for the past 11 years.

Ms. Coutu-Farrell brings over 25 years of experience in the SUD field at both the State and community level. She began her State service with the Office of Child and Family Services as a permanency worker and later moved to the Division of Licensing and Certification where she oversaw licensing community-based mental health and SUD agencies. Prior to State service, she worked in the SUD field in variety of settings, including residential treatment for women, outpatient services, and opioid treatment programs (OTP).

As the SUD Division Manager, her responsibilities include overseeing treatment services across Maine. She has assisted in the development of several initiatives, including county jail-based medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD), Maine's OPTIONS Initiative, and Maine's Naloxone Distribution Initiative. As SOTA, she is also responsible for oversight of the State's 14 OTPs.



Ms. Coutu-Farrell earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mental Health and Human Services with a focus on SUD from the University of Maine in Augusta in 2003 and a Master of Social Work from the University of New England in 2020.

## NASADAD News

### NASADAD Attends Congressional Briefing on Second Chance Act Program Highlights

On Friday, November 22, NASADAD Executive Director Robert Morrison and Public Policy Intern Maddie Hise had the pleasure of attending a Congressional briefing hosted by the Council of State Governments' (CSG) Justice Center on *Recidivism Across All 50 States: Reentry Programs and Second Chance Highlights*.

Opening remarks were provided by Representatives Kelly Armstrong (R-ND-At large) and Laurel Lee (R-FL-15), both members of the bipartisan Second Chance Task Force. The briefing included a panel discussion featuring Cam Ward, Alabama Bureau of Pardons and Parole; Melissa Rothstein, Maryland Office of the Public Defender; Malika Kidd, CSG Justice Center; and Megan Quattlebaum, CSG Justice Center. The panel discussed highlights of CSG's recently released brief on [50 States, 1 Goal: Examining State-Level Recidivism Trends in the Second Chance Act Era](#).

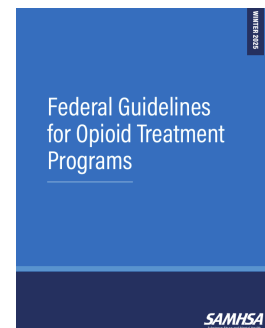


NASADAD was part of a large, diverse coalition in 2005 that ultimately led to passage of the original Second Chance Act signed by President Bush. This year, the same coalition has been educating Congress about the benefits of the [Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2024 \(S.4477\)](#). This bipartisan legislation, which would reauthorize Second Chance Act programs through 2029, was introduced by Senator Capito (R-WV) and cosponsored by Senators Booker (D-NJ), Cornyn (R-TX), Durbin (D-IL), Tillis (R-NC), Welch (D-VT), Cramer (R-ND), and Klobuchar (D-MN). The Senate unanimously passed the bill last night. It is hoped that the House will approve the bill before the end of the year.

## Around the Agencies

### SAMHSA Releases Federal Guidelines for Opioid Treatment Programs and Explanatory Video Series

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released an updated resource on [Federal Guidelines for Opioid Treatment Programs](#) based on changes to regulations in 42 CFR Part 8. These revised guidelines provide best practices for opioid treatment programs (OTP) regarding the changes in 42 CFR Part 8 regulations that went into effect on April 2, 2024. The revised regulations aim to increase access to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD), promote practitioner discretion, support patient-centered care, and reduce barriers to treatment. SAMHSA's new guidelines provide guidance to OTPs on:



- “Creating a healing environment for patients that promotes and sustains engagement through shared decision-making between the patient and practitioner.
- Addressing changes to patient admission criteria and telehealth processes.
- Using clinical decision making and practitioner discretion in providing effective, individualized care within OTPs.
- Developing and implementing procedures to support medication administration,

dispensing and use, including procedures related to take-home doses of methadone.

- Integrating trauma-informed principles and practices.
- Providing support for at-risk populations.
- Ensuring availability of medical, counseling, vocational, educational, and other assessment and treatment services.
- Implementing strategies for ensuring continuity of care for patients.”

SAMHSA also released a [video series](#) consisting of 14 brief videos explaining the changes to 42 CFR Part 8 and their implications in detail.

## NIDA Announces New People with Lived/Living Experience of Substance Use Workgroup

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) announced the formation of a [new working group](#) to the National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse (NACDA) made up of people with lived or living experience with substance use. The new workgroup is designed to advise NIDA on ways to increase engagement of people with lived or living experience with drug use in NIDA-funded research. Workgroup members will provide input to help NIDA co-create standards for engagement in research for individuals with lived or living experience with substance use

NIDA is seeking individuals with current or former experience with either substance use or substance use disorder (SUD), or as a caregiver of someone who does. Applications are due January 10, 2025.

Additional details on expectations for the workgroup and how to apply can be found [here](#).

## NIH HEAL Initiative Releases Overdose Crisis Community Decision Tool



The National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative recently released the [Overdose Crisis Community Decision Tool](#). The Overdose Crisis Community Decision Tool is a free web-based resource that provides users with a customized list of evidence-based strategies to reduce opioid overdose deaths tailored to the needs of their communities. The new tool is based on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) [Opioid-Overdose Reduction Continuum of Care Approach \(ORCCA\) Practice Guide 2023](#) and presents users with questions on their priorities and community resources to identify gaps in services and recommended solutions. Further, the tool offers real-world examples of proven strategies to implement each evidence-based solution.

## HRSA Awards Over \$46 Million in Grant Funding Through the Behavioral Health Integration Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently awarded over \$46 million to 27 grantees through the [Behavioral Health Integration \(BHI\) Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program \(EB-TNP\)](#). The BHI EB-TNP is designed to integrate mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services into primary care settings through the use of telehealth networks in rural and underserved areas in particular. The program also seeks to expand and improve the quality of health information available to providers by evaluating the effectiveness of integrating tele-behavioral health services and developing an evidence-based model to assist providers with implementation and evaluation.

HRSA’s press release announcing the awards can be found [here](#).

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## Research Roundup

### CDC Data Reveals Opioid Overdose Deaths Have Dropped for the 12th Consecutive Month

A [study](#), published in the American Journal of Managed Care (AJMC), analyzed data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) and found that opioid overdose deaths have decreased for the 12th consecutive month in the US. Specifically, the study reports 70,655 predicted opioid overdose deaths through June 2024, the lowest number of deaths since 2020, which is an 18 percent decrease from the 86,401 reported deaths in June 2023. The study also found that overdose death rates are decreasing in all but a few States except for Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.



The study also aggregates overdose deaths and death rates by demographic group.

The study attributes the decreases in deaths related to opioid overdoses to the increasing availability of overdose reversal medications and changes in the drug landscape and calls for investments in the expansion of medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) for people with opioid use disorder (OUD).

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## Webinars to Watch

### JCOIN Webinar: JCOIN Rapid Innovation Grants Call for Proposals for JCOIN 2.0

The Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN), funded through the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative, is hosting a webinar on [JCOIN Rapid Innovation Grants \(J-RIG\) Call for Proposals for JCOIN 2.0](#). This no-cost webinar is on December 6, at 1:00 pm ET. The webinar will give an overview of the [J-RIG program](#), which provides funding to support research projects on emerging policies, practices, or interventions for prevention and treatment of substance use disorder (SUD), as well as overdose prevention, for people in criminal justice settings. The webinar will also highlight past J-RIG projects, application logistics, and reporting requirements.

J-RIG is accepting proposals beginning January 5, 2025.

Registration is required.

### NIDA Constituent Group Briefing Webinar: Annual Monitoring the Future Survey Data Release



The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is hosting a NIDA constituent group briefing webinar on the [Annual Monitoring the Future Survey Data Release](#). This no-cost webinar is on December 17, at 10:30 am ET. The webinar is intended for NIDA constituents and will cover the key findings from the 2023 Monitoring the Future (MTF) Survey on drug and alcohol use and related attitudes among adolescents. The webinar coincides with the full public data release of the 2023 MTF Survey, which will be made available [here](#).

Registration is required.

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