

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Helen Hanks, Commissioner



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 17, 2019

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Expansion of Medication-Assisted Treatment Program at NH Department of Corrections – First Stop NNHCF

June 17, 2019 - (Concord, NH) - The New Hampshire Department of Corrections (NHDOC) announces the expansion of our Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program to assist in the sustained abstinence of opioid use and alcohol use for residents. Our healthcare team has started this wide spread expansion at the Northern New Hampshire Correctional Facility (NNHCF) in Berlin.

On Thursday, June 6, NNHCF residents were provided appointments, recommended by Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselors (LADACs), who were screened by nursing and mental health providers to assess whether they met the eligibility requirements to take part in the expanded program. 23 residents were seen in a one-day clinic who met the criteria and are currently enrolled, with more scheduled appointments for others who have been referred for this treatment service. The Department has outlined the continued roll-out of these clinics for all sites.

The majority of funding for treatment comes from the State Opioid Response grant transferred from the NH Department of Health and Human Services. The SOR grant also provides funding for two additional reentry care coordinator positions who will work with residents diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) as they transition out to parole and into our communities.

The funding has enabled the NHDOC to expand the selection of medication available for treatment of a SUD to better align with community models. “Substance use disorder medication isn’t ‘one size fits all’,” Heidi Guinen, Deputy Director of Forensic Services “We now have additional tools to use to continue to individualize treatment for residents. Ultimately, we want to see all our residents healthier than they were when they arrived to our facilities,” she said.

In addition to medication, residents are to engage in psychosocial treatment. “Research shows the chances for successful treatment are greater simply because of the synergy between those components,” Chief Medical Officer Dr. Thomas Groblewski said. “A patient is apt to more fully participate in and benefit from psychosocial treatment when his/ her drug cravings are blunted or blocked by prescribed MAT medication.”

The model is loosely based on the 2016 expansion of the Rhode Island’s Department of Corrections’ MAT program. Substance Abuse Coordinator Lauranne Howard said Rhode

Island continues to see positive results including decreased mortality. “A study that was conducted on the first six months of the program and published in the [Journal of American Medicine \(JAMA\) Psychiatry](#) showed a 61% decrease in overdose deaths in our state due to the expansion of our MAT program,” she said. “This MAT program is saving lives”.

The MAT clinic will expand to the New Hampshire State Prison for Men and New Hampshire Correctional Facility for Women in the near future furthering part of the Department’s mission statement to provide, “a continuum of services that promote successful re-entry into society for the safety of our citizens”.



Dr. Groblowski speaks with a resident about the requirements to participate in the MAT program.