



# Montgomery County Opioid Court Kickoff Meeting

September 2020



Office of Alcoholism and  
Substance Abuse Services



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IRVING MEDICAL CENTER



Center  
for  
Court  
Innovation



New York State  
Psychiatric Institute

# Welcome and Introductions

## Facilitators

### *Columbia University*

Katherine Elkington, Ph.D. *Principal Investigator*

Margaret Ryan *Project Director*

### *Center for Court Innovation*

Alejandra Garcia, MSW *Senior Program Manager*

Kelly Van Develde, Esq. *Senior Program Manager*

Colleen Gibbons, Esq. *Deputy Director, Upstate*

## Stakeholders

### *Montgomery County*

Hon. Felix Catena *Judge*

Michael Dayian *Court Attorney*

Laura Lee Smith *Court Coordinator*

Kelli McCoski, Esq. *Prosecutor*

William F. Martuscello, Esq. *Defense Atty.*

Jeffrey Smith *Sheriff*

Conifer Park *Treatment Provider*

# Background: Project Court REACH

- Project Court REACH: **R**igorous and **E**vidence-based **A**pproaches for **C**ourt-based **H**ealth Promotion
- Project Court REACH is an implementation science research project
  - Goal: To enhance opioid court operations in New York and improve participants' access to recovery supports and treatment.
- Project REACH is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA; U01 DA050071)



# Background: Project Court REACH

- **Major partners:**

- Columbia University
- New York State Psychiatric Institute
- NYS Office of Court Administration, Office of Policy and Planning
- Center for Court Innovation

- **Other key partners:**

- The New York State Office of Addiction and Support Services (OASAS)
- University of Connecticut School of Medicine
- Weil Cornell Medical College

# Opioid Courts in New York: A Brief History

## Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) in the Justice System Population

- Opioid-related arrests have spiked nationally
- Opioid overdose is the leading cause of death post-release

## Buffalo's Opioid Intervention Court

- Developed to rapidly treat those with OUD to prevent overdose death
  - Immediate linkage to evidence-based treatment and intensive supervision

## NYS Opioid Court Expansion

- The opioid court model is now being expanded across NYS
- A panel of national experts developed the essential elements for opioid courts, incorporating evidence-based practices and Buffalo's model

1. Broad legal eligibility

2. Immediate screen for overdose risk

3. Informed consent after consultation with defense counsel

4. Suspension of prosecution or expedited plea during treatment

5. Rapid clinical assessment and treatment engagement

## The 10 Essential Elements of Opioid Intervention Courts



6. Recovery support services

7. Frequent judicial supervision and compliance monitoring

8. Intensive case management

9. Program completion and continuing care

10. Performance evaluation and program improvement



There is limited guidance on how to develop and implement opioid courts, especially given the **variability of county resources and characteristics**

The Project Court REACH research and technical assistance team is working with ten New York courts to put the *Ten Essential Elements* into **realistic practice**

# Project REACH Sites

1. Chemung
2. Jefferson
- 3. Montgomery**
4. Nassau
5. Oneida
6. Onondaga
7. Ontario
8. Otsego
9. Queens
10. Rensselaer





# Overview of Project Timeline

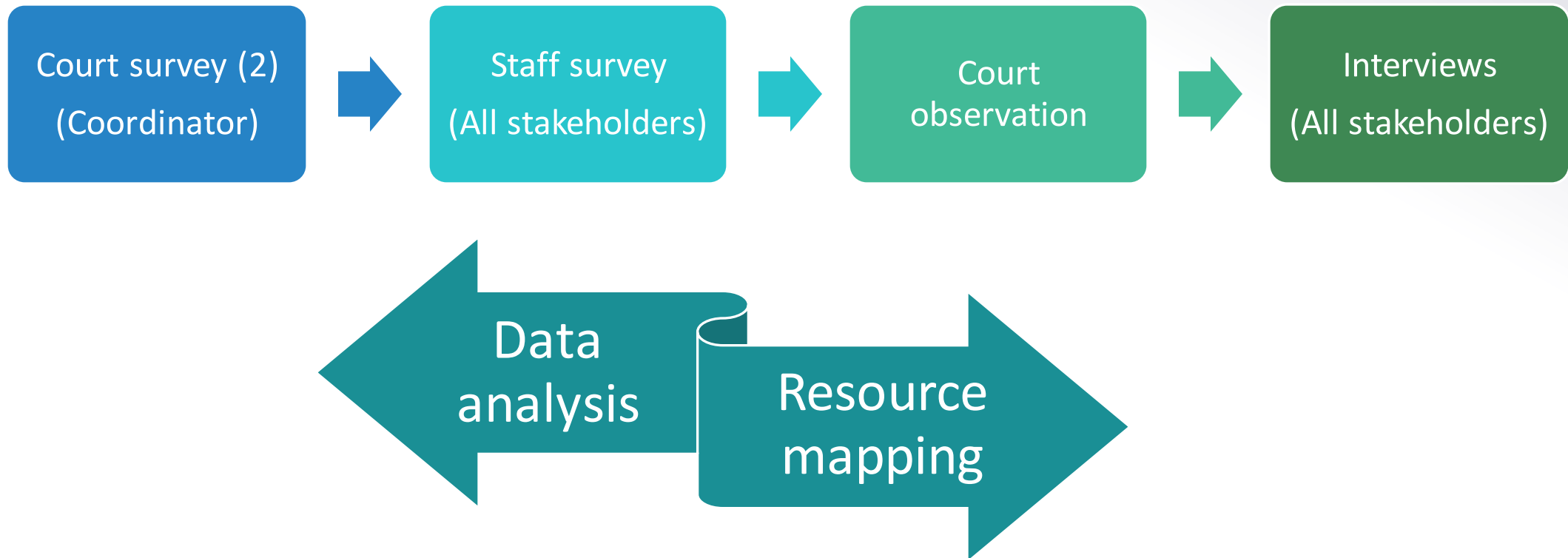
Phase 1: Exploration

Phase 2: Preparation

Phase 3: Implementation

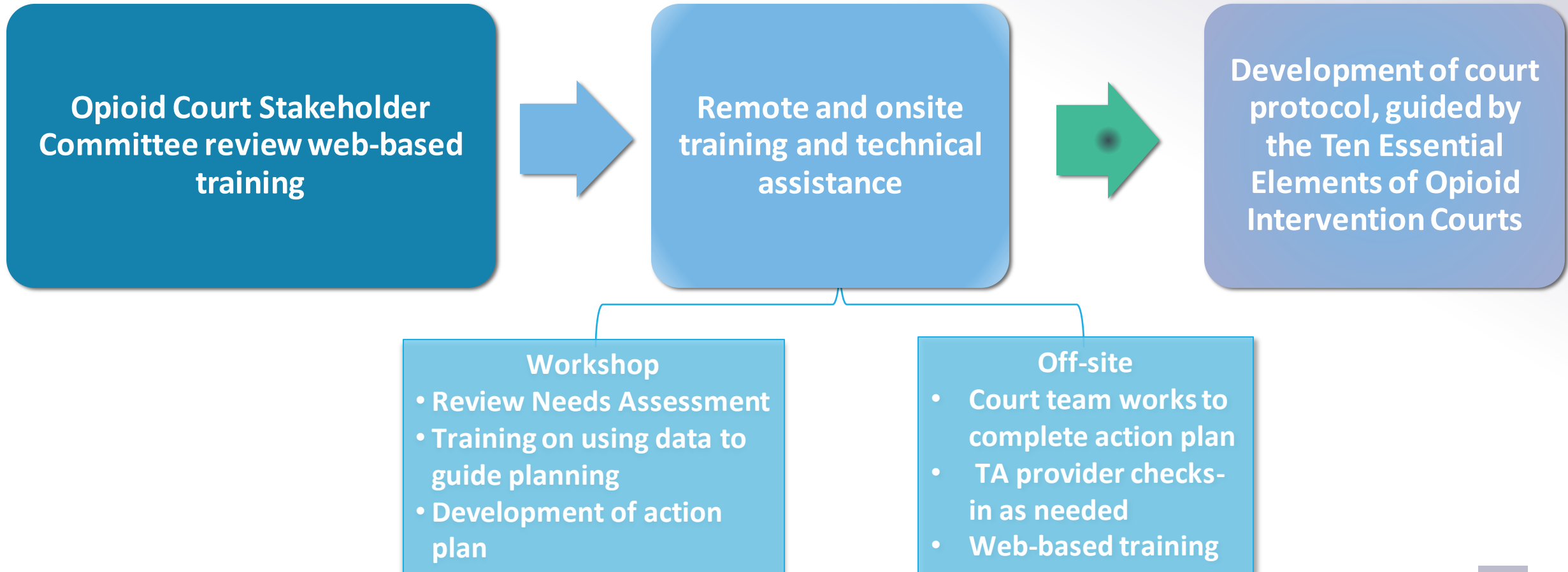
Phase 4: Sustainment

# Phase 1: Needs Assessment



# Phase 2: Preparation

Development and Execution of Strategic Implementation Guide to Launch Opioid Court (~6 months)



# Phase 3 & 4: Roll Out of Opioid Court

## With Guided TA to Improve Ongoing Performance

**Implementation Phase: Active review (12 months)**



**Sustainment Phase: Routine review (6-18 months)**

Feedback mechanisms during Phase 3 & 4:

- Bi-monthly check-in call with Court Team leader during Phase 3
- Opioid Court team focus group at the end of Phase 4

# So What's the Research Part?

- With your **consent** we will be collecting data as we go.
- **Online survey**: thoughts on opioid court, MOUD, readiness to get the court operational/improve functioning, and experiences working with treatment/court systems. (Phase 1 and end of Phase 3)
- **Pre-post quizzes** that are associated with the web-based training modules (provide CLEs)
- **Monthly check-in phone call** (10 mins) to describe progress, staff turn over, etc. (Court liaison only) throughout Phase 3.
- **Focus group** with the stakeholder group at the end of Phase 4.
- These research activities are **all voluntary** and you can chose to participate in all, none, or some.

# How Are My Data Protected?

- We protected your data in a number of ways:
  - Consent form is not signed -- no link to you.
  - Online surveys are anonymous; data secured on encrypted server
  - Results are ONLY presented in aggregate – no individual will EVER be identified in publications or presentations
  - Certificate of Confidentiality from NIH – prevents research data from being subpoenaed.
  - Focus groups are recorded but no names are included in transcripts nor names/county identifiers included on the digital audio files

# Consent to Participate

- You have received the consent forms via email (known as information sheets as we are not documenting your consent via signature).
- Does anyone have any questions about the information sheets (i.e. consent forms) or anything that we have just discussed with respect to research?
- We will reach out to each of you individually following this call to take consent; we will answer any additional questions at that time
  - You are of course welcome to contact me at [ke2143@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:ke2143@cumc.columbia.edu) or 917-838-1871.
- Remember: you can decline to participate at any time or decline to participate in a given activity.

# Questions?

