

# Project Court REACH: Onondaga County CARE Court Action Plan

## Essential Element #1: Broad legal eligibility

Recommendations:

- Create a process for referrals from towns and villages throughout the county by engaging with local police departments and local courts;
- Continuously review eligibility criteria and consider expansion to violent felonies where risk of overdose is indicated;
- Review accepted cases to ensure the program is accepting higher level charges, such as non-violent felonies and violent misdemeanors, in accordance with written eligibility.

Goal 1: The geographic catchment area for CARE Court is all of Onondaga County, including the towns and villages.

Objective 1A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
<p>Create a referral process to CARE Court from towns and villages throughout the county by engaging with local police departments and local courts by summer of 2021.</p>	<p>Do outreach to local courts to identify those interested in piloting a referral process</p> <p>Do outreach to the law enforcement in the jurisdictions of the pilot local courts to educate on CARE Court and expand potential referral pathways</p> <p>Bench card (via CCI)</p>	<p>Judge Cecile Michael Mordue Lou Elliott Brigid Stone</p>	<p>July 2021</p>	<p>CARE Court referrals from local law enforcement increase. Types of cases being referred are not limited to drug possession showing understanding of the process.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

**Essential Element #2: Immediate Screening for Risk of Overdose**

Recommendations:

- Develop new early identification processes with law enforcement;
- Increase buy-in and support from law enforcement and defense counsel through awareness and education efforts via training on OUD and MOUD;
- Develop additional strategies to keep potential participants informed of the CARE Court option and available services while they are awaiting their first court date;
- Consider how to integrate the CRPA navigator into the identification and screening process.

Goal 2: All those who are detained and in custody in Onondaga County will be screened for risk of overdose

Objective 2A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Resume providing immediate screening for potential participants by pretrial release by Spring 2021.	Make inquiries regarding immediate connection for pretrial release to potential participants held in jail.	Judge Cecile	5/20/21	Incarcerated defendants are again being identified and referred for immediate assessment. COMPLETED	Completed
Objective 2B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Engage with law enforcement partners	Syracuse and Sheriff's department to be trained on DAT dates and CARE Court  Outreach to town and village police departments	Judge Cecile Michael Mordue	End of July 2021	Turn around time for DAT is within 72 hours. DAT edited ...timing will be changed to 9:30 (from 1:30) for CARE;	Connected with local Syracuse police and DAT's have been changed to reflect CARE court time and date when needed

				<p>separate box, returnable for 3 business days.</p> <p>T&amp;V police agencies are able to better identify someone at risk of overdose and in need of intervention.</p>	<p>Issue with county sheriff, need to figure out how to connect own and village because they meet once an month and can't accommodate a 72 hour turnover</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

**Essential Element #3: Informed Consent after Consultation with Defense Counsel**

Recommendations:

- The court coordinator should convene necessary stakeholders and work to create a process to connect referred participants from law enforcement to defense counsel;
- Work with technical assistance providers to develop opioid court training and resources to help ensure the group of attorneys who take CARE Court cases are trained on necessary topics related to risk of overdose etc.

Goal 3: All potential CARE Court participants have access to, and consultation with, defense counsel prior to agreeing to the program. .

Objective 3A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Train arraignment attorneys on the requirements and benefits of CARE Court by Fall 2021.	Create one-page info sheet that clearly explains the services and benefits of CARE court for attorney's to hand out to their clients (different from client expectations, this would focus on services benefits)	<p>Judge Cecile Lou Elliott</p> <p>CCI to create a one-pager (broad but with defense attorney considerations, including participant selling points)</p>	<p>8/31/21</p> <p>End of July for draft</p>	A better informed legal community that is able to effectively advise their client of the benefits of the program which would result in an increase in referrals.	Brigid has made info sheet and will send to us to review and edit

**Essential Element #4: Suspension of Prosecution or Expedited Plea**

Recommendations:

- Formalize in writing that there is no penalty for a participant not being successful in CARE Court;
- Become informed on the constitutional implications of holding a participant in custody while they await treatment;
- Consider the health and overdose risks associated with jail stays;
- Consider the impact of jail stays on a participant’s daily obligations such as childcare.

Goal 4: CARE Court works to incentivize participation for CARE Court and all potential participants are aware of benefits of the program.

Objective 4A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Create a document that highlights the benefits of CARE Court and explain the CARE Court program in simple terms	See Goal 3 Objective 3A to coordinate creation of documents.	Brigid Stone Project Court REACH	6/4/21	Participants better understand the benefits to the Court on a personal level and not just on a legal level.	Completed
Objective 4B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Work with DA to develop process or language on building equity for successful CARE Court participation	Develop specific process on cases where there is a victim  Discuss potential outcomes for different charges/risk scores	Judge Cecile Michael Mordue Lou Elliott	End of July	The opportunity to discuss possible participation with the DA’s office on any charge level.	Met with DA to come up with process or language for charge levels Fine with any misdemeanor and non violent felony  If referral for violent felony they are open to discuss

					Not memorialized in writing- CCI to provide language
--	--	--	--	--	--

**Essential Element #5: Rapid Clinical Assessment and Treatment Engagement**

Recommendations:

- Provide court practitioners (judge, prosecutors, and defense) with ongoing training on the science of MOUD and best practices in legal settings;
- Encourage mutual aid and/or recovery community engagement with caution as not all groups support the use of MOUD; evidence-based treatment options that support MOUD should be emphasized;
- Develop partnerships with MOUD prescribers and treatment providers throughout the county to support expansion of referrals

Goal 5: The CARE Court will continue to provide swift and individualized linkages to treatment (including telehealth options)

Objective 5A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Maintain connection to providers and create an updated list of providers and resources	Reconnect with full spectrum of providers after COVID	Tim Zacholl Brigid Stone Project Court REACH	Mid-July 2021	Schedule monthly Providers Meeting. Continue to grow and update the resources available (e.g., centralized list).	Held provider meeting in July and have another one next month
Objective 5B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Examine best practices for using telehealth for CARE Court participants	Create a list of credible telehealth options for treatment and mutual aid	Tim Zacholl Brigid Stone	6/18/21	Having the ability to access a current and updated list of options with regard to	See 7A

	Formalize program's protocols for participant use of technology	Brigid Stone	6/18/21	telehealth. Adding the amended protocol to our Operating Procedures.	
--	---	--------------	---------	---	--

### Essential Element #6: Recovery Support Services

#### Recommendations:

- Continue to develop partnerships with the robust treatment and recovery supportive services in the community;
- Develop a strategic plan to expand partnerships with transitional and supportive housing in the community;
- Expand continuing care opportunities to include more vocational options for graduating participants, more formalized access to employment, job training and preparation, resume-writing, education and GED services.

Goal 6: All participants will have access to a robust and varied network of peer and recovery support services

Objective 6A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Explore availability of peer services and recovery supports in our area.	Connect with local agencies to update our current list of services.	Tim Zacholl Helio Crouse	End of July 2021	Consistent linkage of participants to peer services and like recovery resources.	Have met on peer services and recovery supports but haven't formalized the document

### Essential Element #7: Frequent Judicial Supervision and Compliance Monitoring

Recommendations:

- Allow virtual appearances to supplement in-person court appearances for those who have barriers such as transportation, mobility, or childcare even after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted;
- Ensure the judge is trained in, and applying, motivational interviewing techniques;
- Change the practice of using jail to hold a participant until a treatment bed is available due to its harmful effects and work with community and treatment providers on alternatives to this method;
- Schedule quarterly stakeholder meetings to review court operations.

Goal 7: Technology is used to support and enhance program operations for CARE Court.

Goal 7.1: The CARE Court team and outside stakeholders meet quarterly to review court operations and update policies and procedures.

Objective 7A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Write policy and procedures for CARE Court on virtual appearances by Fall of 2021.	Review current procedures for virtual appearances and determine the best use of the technology.  Consider remote check-ins as an incentive (add to P&P if so)	Brigid Stone Judge Cecile	7/2/21	An increase in participant availability. The ability to better communicate with those that have transportation limitations.	Wrote amended protocols for virtual appearances
Objective 7.1A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Schedule regular quarterly stakeholder meetings beginning Summer 2021.	Find mutually agreed upon time for all stakeholders  Reach out to stakeholders who may not be attending regular staffing but would be useful (ie. law enforcement, peer advocacy, community member, harm reduction advocacy)	Judge Cecile Brigid Stone  Judge Cecile Brigid Stone	Summer 2021 & ongoing	Two stakeholder meetings are held in 2021 and 4 meetings are scheduled in 2022.	Schedule stakeholder meeting for December and 4 quarterly's scheduled for next year

	groups)				
--	---------	--	--	--	--

**Essential Element #8: Intensive Case Management**

Recommendations:

- Continue offering robust case management and coordinated communication between all stakeholders.

Goal 8: All communication protocols will be outlined in policy and procedure manual

Objective 8A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Update and/or create new MOUs for all key stakeholders outlining communication expectations	<p>Review existing MOUs for needed edits or additions</p> <p>Circulate to relevant appropriate team members and community partners for input</p> <p>Add revised MOUs to Policy and Procedure Manual as appendices (if applicable)</p>	Brigid Stone Project Court REACH	7/23/21	<p>Increased understanding of roles and responsibilities between stakeholders.</p> <p>Increased communication between stakeholders which in turn provides better care to the participants and more positive outcomes.</p>	MOU template being reviewed by OCA and CCI will review CARE courts

**Essential Element #9: Program Completion and Continuing Care**

Recommendations:

- Create a formal completion criteria checklist that could include elements of social stabilization to be addressed through case management;
- Participants and case managers should develop a comprehensive, voluntary continuing care plan to support recovery after program completion;
- Develop an MOU to formalize how time spent in CARE Court will count towards treatment court participation (where applicable).



Goal 9: The CARE Court will have formalized completion criteria and credit for participating.

Objective 9A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Formalize program completion criteria.	<p>Develop a checklist with key stakeholder input</p> <p>Distribute completion criteria to defense counsel</p> <p>Add criteria to CARE Court Policy &amp; Procedure Manual</p>	<p>Judge Cecile Michael Mordue</p> <p>Brigid Stone</p> <p>Lou Elliott</p> <p>Tim Zacholl</p>	End of July 2021	<p>Increased participation <b>and</b> successful completion.</p> <p>Understanding program requirements helps form tangible goals for the participant.</p>	<p>CCI will send our checklist</p> <p>Wrote and will send to CCI for review</p>
Objective 9B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Use a matrix to determine how time spent in CARE Court will count towards treatment court participation.	<p>Develop matrix with key stakeholder input</p> <p>Distribute to CARE Court team members and treatment court staff</p> <p>Add matrix to CARE Court Policy &amp; Procedure Manual</p>	Brigid Stone	7/2/21	<p>Increased buy in after realizing stabilization time counts toward future PSC participation <b>and</b> creates a stronger foundation in recovery.</p>	Need CCI help

**Essential Element #10: Performance Evaluation and Program Improvement**

Recommendations:

- Work with Project Court REACH staff to identify areas and strategies for data entry improvement, including the use of the Opioid Court dashboard;
- Implement recommendations from this report with the help of technical assistance from Project Court REACH.

Goal 10: CARE Court program has consistent and accurate data entry and participates in regular data analysis and program or policy adjustments based on the analysis.

Objective 10A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Work with Project Court Reach to determine correct data measures to be inputting by June 2021	Identify data measures needed to be collected  Determine process for consistent data entry	Brigid Stone Project Court REACH  Brigid Stone	July 2021	Data is collected consistently and can be accessed by CARE Court to identify program outcomes	Met with Columbia
Objective 10B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures	Updates / Notes
Implement a regular data analysis process by Fall 2021.	Identify necessary resources for data analysis  Review data analysis and necessary policy or program adjustments based on data at stakeholder quarterly meetings (see Goal 7.1)	Brigid Stone Project Court REACH  CARE Court team led by Judge Cecile	Fall 2021	The CARE Court team discusses data analysis and makes adjustments at quarterly stakeholder meetings.	Met with Columbia for data meeting

**Prioritizing Elements:**

1. Broad Legal Eligibility: Expand geographic access to the court

2. Screening: Have everyone who has been detained and in custody in Onondaga County screened for risk of overdose
3. Defense Consent: All potential CARE Court participants have access to, and consultation with, defense counsel prior to agreeing to the program
4. Suspension of Prosecution: Incentivize participation for CARE Court
5. Treatment Engagement: Maintain rapid assessment and treatment engagement and continue to enhance treatment services
6. Recovery Support Services: Strengthen and expand existing peer and recovery supports
7. Frequent Supervision and Compliance Monitoring: Have policy and procedures for CARE Court on virtual appearances; Have quarterly stakeholders meetings
8. Intensive Case Management: Communication protocols outlined in policy and procedure manual
9. Program Completion: Formalized completion criteria in updated P&P; Formalized CARE court credit for case disposition/equities
10. Performance Evaluation CARE Court program has consistent and accurate data entry and participates in regular data analysis

General notes:

10.20.21

- 5 participants
  - 81 referrals from May until right now
  - Zero referrals from arraignment- people walking in on DAT
    - Core group of attorneys who do arraignment
    - Just talked with their supervisor about adjusting their intake form
- Eric Rodriguez- brought on to help transition