



Chemung County HOPE (Heroin Overdose
Prevention Effort) Court
Technical Assistance Workshop: Day 1
November 16, 2021



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:

- Colleen Gibbons, Deputy Director of the Upstate Office, Center for Court Innovation
- Alejandra Garcia, Senior Program Manager, Center for Court Innovation
- Courtney Williams, Senior Program Manager, Center for Court Innovation
- Katherine Elkington, Associate Professor, Columbia University, New York Psychiatric Institute
- Margaret Ryan, Project Director, Columbia University, New York Psychiatric Institute
- Dennis Reilly, Statewide Drug Court Coordinator, Division of Policy and Planning
- Susan Sturges, Opioid Court Coordinator, Division of Policy and Planning

Stakeholders:

- Hon. Steven Forrest, Presiding Judge, HOPE Court
- Desiree Rogers, Court Coordinator, HOPE Court
- Olivia Fontana, Esq., Public Defender
- John Schwenkler, Esq., Public Defender
- Zachary Persichini, Esq., ADA, Chemung County
- John Brennan, Esq., Public Advocate
- Casey Johnson, Chief Clerk, Elmira City Court
- Samantha Pike, Chief Clerk, Elmira City Court
- Sheyvon Simeon, Court Clerk, Chemung County Court
- Melissa Jankowski, Probation, Chemung County
- Kris Thorne, Elmira Police Captain
- William Schrom, Chemung County Sheriff
- Anthony Alvernaz, Elmira Police Chief
- Brian Hart, Commissioner of Community Services
- Glenn Jarvis, Director, New Dawn
- Katie Hicks, Our House, Salvation Army
- Bailey Johnson, Director, CASA Trinity
- Kristen Csikortos, Liaison, CASA Trinity
- Ellen Sidari, Family Services of Chemung County

Agenda

- Project resources
- Review of project goals
- Findings and recommendations
- Action planning



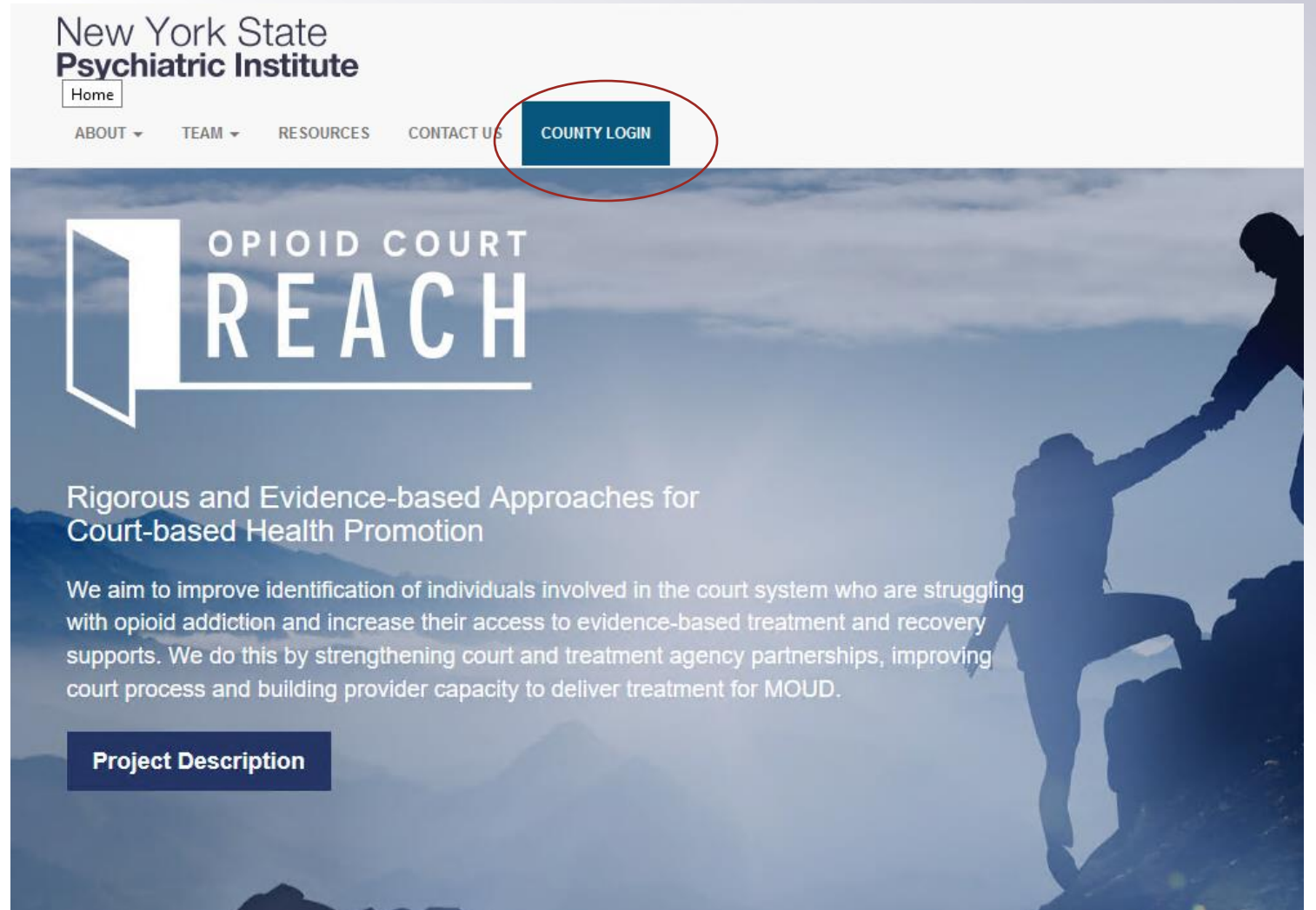
Rigorous and Evidence-based Approaches for Court-based Health Promotion

- Project Court REACH is an implementation science research project
- Project REACH is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- Collaboration between Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute, the Center for Court Innovation, and the Office of Courts Administration
- Research + training and technical assistance
- 10 opioid courts in New York
- Goal: Improve **access to treatment** and **recovery supports** for participants, and enhance **opioid court operations**

Project Website

projectreach.nyspi.org

You will receive a personalized login for your county page and resources



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Chemung County

Introduction to Chemung County Opioid Court REACH

Welcome! You are one of the 10 counties participating in Project Opioid Court REACH. This is your county's private page where you will find project materials, your county's Technical Assistance leads and contact information, and upcoming events and activities.

Project Resources

A directory of county-specific resources including your Needs Assessment Report, and other court and clinical resources.

[Access Project Resources](#)

Training Modules

[Register Here](#)

Technical Assistance Team

AJ and Colleen are excited to be working with you. Feel free to contact them at the emails below if you ever have any questions.



Training Modules

My Courses



JCOIN Module 1: The Opioid Crisis in Context

0% Complete
0/1 Steps



JCOIN Module 2: Medications for Opioid Use Disorder

0% Complete
0/1 Steps



JCOIN Module 3: 10 Essential Elements of Opioid Courts

0% Complete
0/1 Steps

Project Timeline

Phase 1: Needs Assessment



Phase 2: Targeted Enhancement Support

Phase 3: Roll-out

Phase 4: Monitoring



The Three Questions:

1. What are we trying to accomplish?
2. What changes can we make that will result in improvement?
3. How will we know that changes result in (sustained) improvement?

What data are we using to answer these questions?



For the Needs Assessment Report:

- Interviews with stakeholders
- Administrative surveys

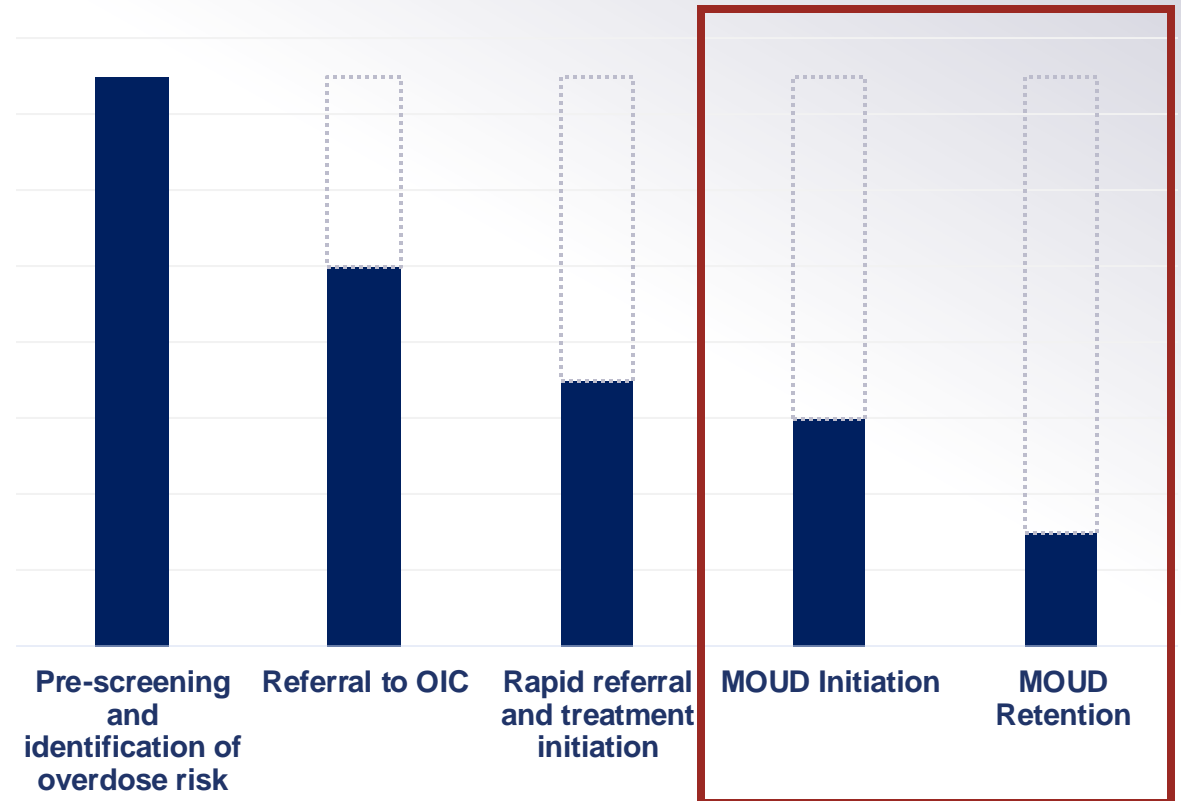
Over the Course of the Project:

- UCMS data
- Feedback from check-in calls/future TA

We will use this data to measure court progress and support informed decision-making to **continuously improve** both court & court participant outcomes

What are we trying to accomplish?

- Opioid Court aims to reduce opioid overdose by rapidly linking court participants to treatment where they can stabilize.
- The opioid care cascade (depicted on the right) is a way of looking to see how opioid court participants make it to treatment and where they get lost.



What changes can we make that will result in improvement? Implementing the 10 Essential Elements.

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

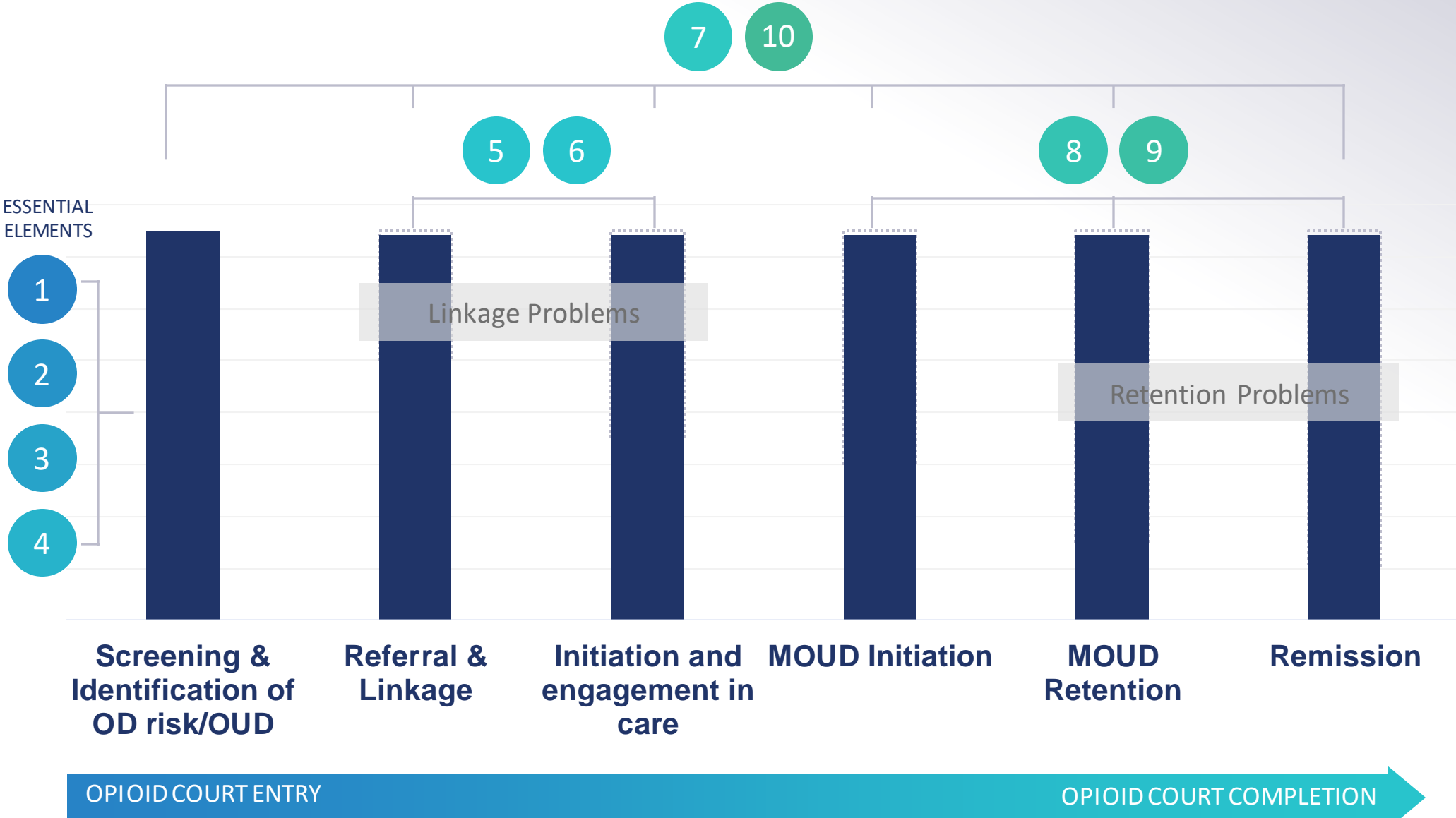
7. Frequent judicial supervision and compliance monitoring

8. Intensive case management

9. Program completion and continuing care

10. Performance evaluation and program improvement

And how will we know that a change is an improvement?



Snapshot of Chemung County HOPE Court

- Court receives **referrals** from arraignments, drug court, and probation.
- The court partners with **multiple treatment providers** that offer a **range of services**, including **MOUD**.
- The court does not have a written completion criteria and makes completion decisions on a **case-by-case basis**.

Needs Assessment Findings and Recommendations

Essential Element #1: Broad Eligibility

Findings:

- Accepts most misdemeanor and felony charges, except violent felonies
- Court receives referrals from numerous sources, including probation, and drug court
- Referrals are reviewed by the team twice a week
- Law enforcement is willing to hand out referral cards at the point of arrest or ticketing

Recommendations:

- Continue accepting a broad range of charges into HOPE Court;
- Continue accepting referrals from multiple sources;
- Strengthen working partnership with town and village courts to facilitate more referrals; and
- Create process for Elmira PD and other police departments to make referrals to HOPE Court at the point of arrest.

Essential Element #2: Immediate Screening for Risk of Overdose

Findings:

- The risk of overdose screening tool is administered at the time of referral
- The tool is administered by HOPE Court case managers or certified peer
- Few referrals have come from first responding officers

Recommendations:

- Facilitate HOPE Court referrals from first responding police officers;
- Develop written referral process for officers; and
- Create educational materials and strategy, including trainings, to encourage officers to make HOPE Court referrals

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

Findings:

- Both the Public Defender's Office and the Assigned Counsel's Office were actively involved in the planning of HOPE Court and continue to be involved in stakeholder meetings.
- Defense counsel is present at all opioid court appearances to help facilitate referrals and the suspension of the case.

Recommendations:

- Continue active collaboration with Public Defender's Office and Assigned Counsel's Office;
- Send attorneys in both offices Project Court REACH's CLE training modules to further educate about opioid court; and
- Re-start (due to the pandemic) regular HOPE Court meetings to improve communication among all parties.

Essential Element #4: Suspension of Prosecution or Expedited Plea

Findings:

- Prosecution is suspended while individual is involved in HOPE Court
- Prosecutor is on the HOPE Court team
- ADAs could be more involved in identification and referral

Recommendations:

- Engage new ADA in Project Court REACH;
- Encourage ADAs to identify potential participants and refer them to HOPE Court; and
- Raise level of awareness of policies and procedures for HOPE Court.

Essential Element #5: Rapid Clinical Assessment and Treatment Engagement

Findings:

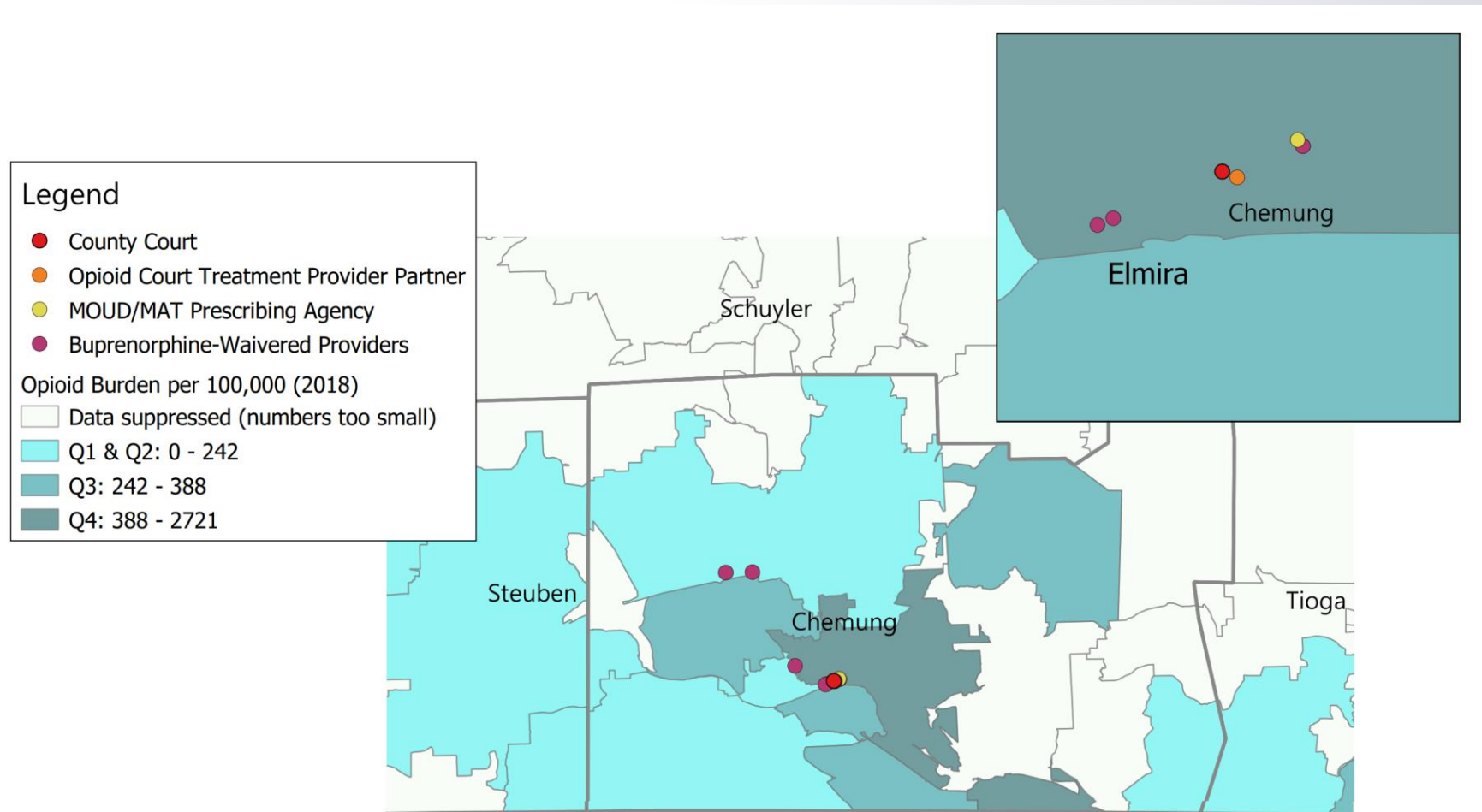
- Court works closely with partner treatment agency, CASA Trinity for substance use disorder treatment services
- Case managers from CASA Trinity are involved in both the screening and assessment process as well as managing participants' treatment plans
- Court's partnership with CASA Trinity ends September 2021 due to end of funding cycle
- Need to strengthen communication with Chemung Family Services, which provides mental health services to HOPE Court participants

Essential Element #5: Rapid Clinical Assessment and Treatment Engagement (cont'd)

Recommendations:

- Continue collaborative development of treatment plans with participants;
- Strengthen communication between mental health service providers and the court; and
- Explore additional funding options for peer(s) and case manager(s).

Treatment Capacity in Chemung County



Treatment Capacity in Chemung County

- **CASA Trinity** provides case managers, certified peers, and MOUD to HOPE Court participants. After September 2021, HOPE Court will need to find alternative funding for these positions.
- Participants receive mental health services at **Chemung Families Services (CFS)**.
- Need for strengthened communication between **CFS** and the HOPE Court.
- Need for additional treatment providers, especially if needs extend past current capacity.

Essential Element #6: Recovery Support Services

Findings:

- Certified Recovery Peer Advocate willingly provides support and advocacy beyond what is required of the role, which includes working with individuals who are not yet formally involved in HOPE Court.
- Peer advocate is available to facilitate referrals as well as facilitate a warm handoff to treatment if Elmira PD contact her.

Recommendations:

- Engage SOR funding recipient to inquire about peer funding
- Incorporate peer into referral process by facilitating communication between Elmira Police and the peer for a warm handoff to treatment

Essential Element #7: Frequent Judicial Supervision and Compliance Monitoring

Findings:

- HOPE Court meets twice weekly where participants have the opportunity to interact with the judge (via tele-visits)
- Participants who are completing inpatient treatment have weekly check-ins
- All drug testing occurs at program sites as the court does not have on-site testing
- Responses to positive drug test are non-punitive; treatment plans are reevaluated and adjusted if need be

Recommendations:

- Continue to utilize tele-visits to engage with participants completing inpatient treatment even after court appearances return to in-person

Essential Element #8: Intensive Case Management

Findings:

- Case managers, provided by CASA Trinity, are highly involved in HOPE Court, including curfew checks and communicating participant progress with the rest of the stakeholder team.

Recommendations:

- Continue to foster strong relationships with local treatment agencies who support the model

Essential Element #9: Program Completion and Continuing Care

Findings:

- Continuing care is provided on an individual basis, based on the participant's criminal charge and treatment need.
- Need to establish clear program completion criteria

Recommendations:

- Amend policies & procedures manual to provide program completion criteria, including program length and successful completion requirements.

Essential Element #10: Performance Evaluation and Program Improvement

Findings:

- Since October 2019, 4 of the 28 accepted participants successfully completed the program.
- Limited information available in UCMS pertaining to screening, participation acceptance, and treatment initiation.

Recommendations:

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

Introduction to Action Planning

Finding:				
Goal 1:				
Objective 1A:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures
Objective 1B:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures
Objective 1C:	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures

Wrap-up and Next Steps!



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Thank you!



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