



## **Half of Massachusetts Adult Population Knows Someone Struggling with Opioid Addiction, Poll Finds**

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A new WBUR poll suggests that the opioid epidemic is hitting more Massachusetts residents close to home. The survey of 660 adults showed that around 57 percent of the Massachusetts adult population knows someone who has struggled with opioid addiction over the last year alone.

In addition to this, around 53 percent of respondents agree that heroin addiction in Massachusetts is a ?crisis?. They said the same thing about opiates, opioids, and other prescription painkillers. An additional 39 percent said that the issue is a ?major problem?.

The poll was released following state data that showed 2018 was the third straight year of nearly 2,000 opioid-related overdose deaths in Massachusetts.

Despite the large scale of the problem, the survey also suggests that most state residents are not on board with a controversial law that allows the state to use jails and prisons to involuntarily commit some men to addiction treatment. Nearly 70 percent of respondents say they are somewhat or strongly opposed to the practice.

42-year-old Nikki Fortes from Boston said: "I think there need to be treatment centers; maybe opening the ones we had before that have been closed down might be helpful. I don't think just forcibly incarcerating people is an effective way to treat addiction."

On the other hand, 36-year-old Michael Proule of New Bedford says that the law may be able to help people who otherwise wouldn't seek treatment on their own.

"My sister and her husband got hooked on heroin—they were shooting up. It destroyed my nephews and my niece. When you're in that mind state, you can't think straight, and you need help and you need to be forced to get help," Proule said.

Right now the opioid crisis is killing hundreds of Americans every day. The epidemic is now being described as the worst drug crisis in US history. The death toll is still increasing, and various states are looking to expand addiction treatment programs.

More and more lawsuits are being filed against drug manufacturing companies that allegedly played a role in spreading the opioid epidemic. Purdue Pharma, the company that created OxyContin, and the multi-billionaire Sackler family that controls it, is one of the biggest targets of these lawsuits.

Just recently, five more states announced that they are taking legal action against Purdue Pharma and members of the Sackler family. Attorneys general of West Virginia, Kansas, Maryland, Iowa, and Wisconsin took part in the coordinated effort against the manufacturer of the powerful narcotic, accusing them of deceptively pushing powerful painkillers and misrepresenting the drugs' safety as the pills sparked the epidemic.

The Sackler family is seeking a global settlement in order to deal with all of the lawsuits at once. [Click the link to see Worcester's top rehab placement programs.](#)

Purdue earlier said that the "complaints are part of a continuing effort to try these cases in the court of public opinion rather than the justice system. The states cannot link the conduct alleged to the harm described, and so they have invented stunningly overbroad legal theories, which if adopted by courts, will undermine the bedrock legal principle of causation."

If someone in the family is struggling with opioid or alcohol addiction, it is important to seek help. A combination of medical detox and behavioral therapy can go a long way in the fight against drug abuse. But because every individual is affected by addiction differently, a comprehensive program tailored to their specific needs is necessary. [Look for a nearby addiction treatment facility today and find out how drug](#)

treatment programs work.

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