

## Local jurisdictions pay the price for nation's opioid crisis

Co-Founder and Managing Partner [Harry Nelson](#) was interviewed by the Associated Press regarding the recent \$270 million settlement received by five Oklahoma counties in opioid-related lawsuits. Of the settlement, \$200 million will be used to fund a university drug treatment and research center.

From the article:

A recent state auditor's report found the number of Ohio Medicaid recipients affected by opiate abuse surged 262 percent between 2010 and 2016. The number of people eligible to receive medication-assisted treatment jumped from 6,500 to 48,000 over the same period, while the costs of those treatments increased sevenfold to more than \$110 million a year.

Some state attorneys general and others suing the industry say they are not inclined to settle, in part because they want the full human and financial toll of the opioid crisis to come out publicly at trial. And yet their hands could be forced.

Purdue officials have considered bankruptcy as the potential liabilities from the lawsuits have mounted. That prospect plus a looming trial date might have accelerated the settlement talks in Oklahoma — and may do the same elsewhere.

"I suspect that the seriousness of that threat is going to motivate a lot of the other states and counties that have lawsuits pending," said Harry Nelson, a Los Angeles-based health care lawyer.

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