

“The Hidden Crisis of Addiction: Pregnancy Behind Bars”

Episode Overview

This episode examines the struggle with addiction faced by pregnant incarcerated people. The lack of care in facilities across states carries the risk of harm to incarcerated people and their fetuses.



- Pregnant people are regularly denied access to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorder (SUD), including medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder (OUD)—a major public health concern.
- Federal funding opportunities that divert pregnant people from incarceration into community-based treatment are underutilized by states.

TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Most states and counties have no laws specifically addressing SUD screening and treatment for pregnant people in their correctional facilities.
- ✓ A **two-pronged approach** may alleviate this issue:
 - ✓ First, states must adopt clear and comprehensive legislation mandating SUD screening and evidence-based treatment, including MAT, for pregnant people in correctional facilities.
 - ✓ Second, states should take advantage of federal funding to support and expand diversion programs that offer alternatives to incarceration.