



Nevada Department of Corrections

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NDOC to Launch Vivitrol Pilot Program to Fight Addiction

The Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) in partnership with the Department of Public Safety Division of Parole and Probation (P&P) announces it is launching a pilot program using the drug Vivitrol to address opiate addiction in our communities. The program is scheduled to begin in April 2017, and will involve 100 qualified inmates who have volunteered to participate in the program and who are scheduled for release in the coming months.

Vivitrol works by blocking opioid receptors in the brain inhibiting the dopamine production rendering no physical effect from drug use. Each inmate will receive an injection a few days prior to release which lasts approximately a month and will be provided by the pharmaceutical company Alkermes, Inc. free of charge to the first 100 volunteers. Once the inmates are released, they will be set up with community providers who will continue the treatment which will be covered by Medicaid.

“This program has been used in other states with incredible results,” stated NDOC Director James Dzurenda. “We reviewed the data and this program is working very well for those inmates wanting to beat addiction. These are the types of evidence based programs we are interested in bringing to Nevada.”

The program will launch in two facilities that have active substance abuse programs, Warm Springs Correctional Center in Carson City and Southern Desert Correctional Center in Las Vegas. The pilot program will last 18 months with NDOC and P&P tracking both relapse and revocation data. NDOC joins the ranks of Vermont, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and many other state prison systems that have incorporated the use of Vivitrol therapy to releasing inmates. A large number of local and county jails have launched similar programs across the country.

“If there’s something simple that we can do which will build safer communities and help people to lead better lives, we owe it to our citizens to do it,” said Dzurenda. “This will help us curb the cycle of incarceration one inmate at a time.”