

# **Bristol County Sheriff's Office gets perfect score on opioid treatment audit, earns national accreditation**

"Another inspection, another perfect score.

The Bristol County Sheriff's Office has earned more high honors for its care and custody of inmates with the recent announcement that its Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) has earned national accreditation from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC).

The Sheriff's Office was found by medical experts to be in compliance with all 47 of NCCHC's nationally recognized standards in several areas of patient care and treatment. The 100% score on the audit netted the BCSO three years of accreditation.

The BCSO was notified of the results in an Oct. 31 letter from Amy Panagopoulos, who is the vice president of accreditation for NCCHC.

"This is an amazing achievement. I couldn't be more proud of our staff for their professionalism and dedication," Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson said. "Our Opioid Treatment Program, which utilizes subutex and other doctor-approved Opiate Use Disorder medications, is critical to helping inmates beat drug addiction, so getting a perfect audit report from the experts on one of our main focuses and priorities is something I'm very proud of."

Perfect audit scores are nothing new for the Bristol County Sheriff's Office, which has achieved the 100% mark on back-to-back audits from the American Corrections Association over the

last six years.

The Bristol County Sheriff's Office underwent a rigorous professional assessment in September by a team of experienced physicians and experts on correctional health care. The BCSO met or exceeded every opioid treatment industry standard in areas such as patient care, health promotion, safety and disease prevention, governance and administration, personnel and training, special needs and services, and medical-legal issues.

"In achieving NCCHC accreditation, the Bristol County Sheriff's Office has demonstrated its commitment to quality, standards-based correctional health care," said Deborah Ross, CEO of NCCHC. "Accreditation is a voluntary process, and we commend the Bristol County Sheriff's Office for successfully undertaking this challenge. The health of incarcerated people is a vitally important component of public health."

Sheriff Hodgson said that communication and cooperation between Correctional Psychiatric Services, the BCSO's health care vendor, and the security staff played a major role in the OTP's success. In addition to administering opiate use medications such as subutex and methodone, the BCSO's program also includes individual therapy and group counselling.

"This is truly a team effort between clinicians, medical staff, treatment counselors and security to make sure these substance use medication programs are administered safely, properly and effectively," Sheriff Hodgson said. "We remain committed to administering excellent health care to all incarcerated individuals.""