



CITY OF NEW BRITAIN

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THE HONORABLE ERIN E. STEWART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF NEW BRITAIN TO FILE LAWSUIT AGAINST OPIOID MANUFACTURERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

NEW BRITAIN, CT—The City of New Britain has retained international law firm Scott+Scott Attorneys at Law, LLP, to represent them in litigation against pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors. New Britain joins dozens of governmental entities suing companies alleged to have overstated treatment benefits while downplaying the addictive risks of opioid drugs.

In 2012, Connecticut ranked fiftieth in the nation for opioid deaths, with two per 100,000 people. By 2015, despite legislative actions aimed at curbing the opioid crisis, that rate grew 550 percent. Connecticut's ranking for opioid deaths skyrocketed to twelfth.

According to the State's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, a staggering 917 people in Connecticut died from drug overdoses in 2016—a 25 percent jump from 2015. With 35 deaths in 2016, New Britain ranks fifth in the state for opioid-related deaths.

Through the lawsuit, New Britain seeks to recoup burgeoning costs that opioid addiction has imposed on New Britain's social and human service budgets as well as public safety, according to Mayor Erin Stewart.

“Over the last several years, opiates have had a devastating impact on the lives of individuals, their families, and other loved ones right here in our community,” said Mayor Stewart. “These drugs have been abused beyond their original intended use and their misuse has turned into an epidemic affecting all walks of life.”

The administration of Narcan[®], a medication that blocks the effects of opiate overdose, has escalated 81 percent for emergency responses between May 2014 and April 2017 in New Britain, according to data from New Britain Emergency Medical Services.

“Our ambulance crews respond to this crisis nearly every day,” explained New Britain EMS Chief Bruce Baxter. “And we see how the tragedy sadly extends well beyond the patient.”

Staff at Central Connecticut State University, New Britain EMS, and the New Britain Fire Department are all trained and equipped with Narcan[®].

“The abuse of opiates is the serial killer of our time,” said New Britain Police Department Chief James Wardwell. “I have served this City for nearly 24 years and have never seen so much death caused by any other single source. We have dedicated more resources than ever before to fight against this devastating tide, and will continue to do all we can with our community partners to protect life.”

According to the agreement between Scott+Scott and the City of New Britain, the firm will be entitled to attorney's fees only if they win or settle the opioid litigation. Handling the case will not cost New Britain taxpayers.

Scott+Scott, headquartered in Connecticut, has offices in New York, Ohio, California, and London, England. The law firm has recovered billions of dollars for its clients in securities fraud, antitrust/competition, and consumer fraud litigation.

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