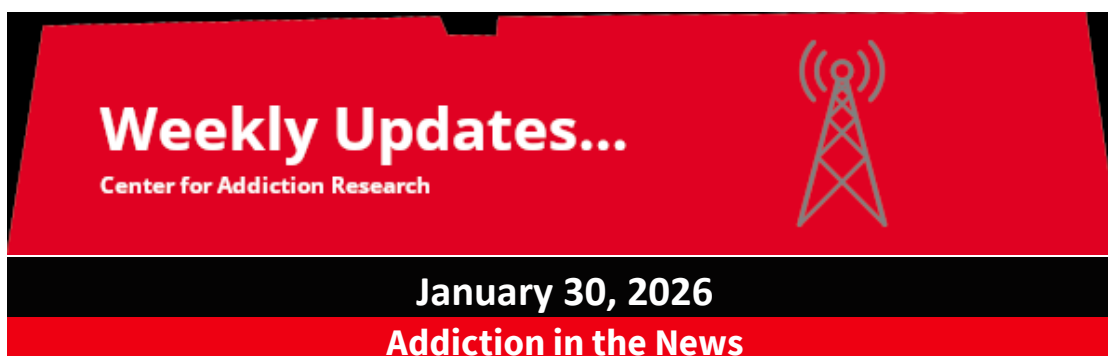


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)) to change your communication preferences. Thank you.

Thank you for your interest in the Center for Addiction Research - our mission is to accelerate scientific progress in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders and their consequences by fostering research collaborations across: 1) UC departments, colleges, and centers including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; 2) Local, regional, and state community and governmental partners; and 3) Other academic institutions and industry."



### **UC/ Regional News**

#### **Rep. Manning highlights new OneOhio grant funding to combat addiction, strengthen recovery**

State Rep. Gayle Manning (R-Avon) recently announced that the OneOhio Recovery Foundation has launched a new statewide round of opioid settlement grant funding, making up to \$45.7 million available to support prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts across Ohio, according to a news release. Regional Grant Cycle 2 invites organizations working to address substance use disorders to prepare for the Funding Inquiry window, which opened Jan. 14 and will close Feb. 11, the release said. The full Request for Proposals is available on the OneOhio Grant Headquarters webpage at [OneOhioFoundation.com/Grants](http://OneOhioFoundation.com/Grants). "These...

#### **Gallia County health officials warn of Xylazine use**

Xylazine, a powerful veterinary tranquilizer, has been making its way into the drug market since the early 2000s, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Increased xylazine usage has been detected in Gallia County, according to health officials. Within the last year and a half, xylazine has frequently shown up in the systems of those in the county who overdosed. Dr. Glenn Fisher, the Gallia County Health Commissioner, said 75% of the overdose deaths in Gallia County within the last six to nine months have contained xylazine. On March 29, 2023, Gov. Mike DeWine classified xylazine as a Schedule III Controlled...

### **She missed son's milestones while jailed in addiction. Now she's working to change Kentucky law.**

FRANKFORT — Brittany Herrington missed her son's first time catching the flu, his first time riding a bike, his bout with chickenpox and the way his toddler "fat face" came in because she was incarcerated. Herrington had asked to be court-ordered to a residential treatment program but was denied. Outpatient treatment, too difficult to reach from her rural Kentucky home, was not fully effective for her. Without that rigorous, inpatient care that she sought, Herrington didn't know how to get sober, which she desperately wanted so she could show up for her child. The Eastern Kentucky woman, now 41 and a mom of two, finally got...

## **National News**

### **Tailored Support Strategy May Increase Screening for Unhealthy Alcohol Use**

A tailored practice facilitation strategy was linked to increased adoption of evidence-based screening and counseling for unhealthy alcohol use among adults at small and medium-sized primary care practices, a quality improvement study suggested. Among 21 practices serving more than 54,000 adults in North Carolina, mean screening rates jumped from 17.4% per practice to 57.6% by the end of the second quarter of practice facilitation implementation ( $P < 0.001$ ), which included quality improvement coaching, electronic health record support, and training on screening and counseling, reported Daniel E. Jonas, MD, MPH, of the...

### **Alcohol-intoxicated, severely injured patients often misdiagnosed, receive less treatment before hospital arrival**

Physical trauma is the leading cause of death in young adults. About 1 in 4 patients with multiple trauma is alcohol-intoxicated at the time of injury, typically suffering from a fall or a traffic accident. The medical assessment of severely injured people on the scene and en route to the hospital is a crucial and challenging step, determining life-saving measures, time-critical interventions, transport decisions, and hospital destinations. This assessment is more difficult in patients who have used alcohol, which affects physiological, neurological, and cognitive processes and behavior. Little is known about the prehospital treatment of...

### **New Report: States Should Increase Tobacco Taxes to Reduce Tobacco Use and Raise Revenue to Fund Critical Public Health Programs**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – States should significantly increase tobacco taxes to reduce tobacco use and raise billions in new revenue that can help fund critical tobacco prevention and other health programs, according to a new report released today by leading public health organizations. The report is being released as state legislatures are convening for their 2026 sessions and need to address revenue shortfalls, including those caused by deep cuts to federal health programs made in the past year. These include efforts to eliminate the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, which provides financial and technical assistance to...

### **Major US tobacco brands flout policies to restrict young people's access to their content on Instagram, finds study**

Leading US tobacco brands are flouting platform and federal marketing policies designed to restrict young people's access to their content on the popular social media platform Instagram, indicates research published online in the journal Tobacco Control. Violations include lax or missing age verification, disclosure on brand-influencer relationships, and health warnings, the findings show. In 2024, around 2.25 million middle and high school students reported having used a tobacco or nicotine product in the past 30 days. That's nearly 550,000 fewer than in 2023, but still leaves millions of teen nicotine users...

### **Genes, smoking and obesity raise pneumonia risk, especially for older adults**

Researchers at the University of Oulu have identified genes that increase susceptibility to pneumonia. Alongside inherited risk factors, smoking and higher body mass were also found to raise the risk of developing the disease. The study, published in eBioMedicine, identified a total of 12 genetic regions associated with pneumonia risk, eight of which were identified for the first time. Many of these regions are linked to the regulation of the body's inflammatory response. However, among patients with recurrent pneumonia and among older patients, genes associated with nicotine dependence played a particularly prominent role. The...

### **Novel Opioid Receptor Drug Cuts IPF Cough**

The novel opioid agonist/antagonist nalbuphine offered relief from chronic cough associated with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), the phase IIb CORAL trial showed. Nalbuphine extended release (ER) reduced objective cough frequency by 48-60% across three doses tested versus 17% with placebo, with reduced patient-reported cough frequency at 6 weeks on the two higher doses as well, Philip L. Molyneaux, MD, PhD, of the Imperial College London, and colleagues reported in JAMA. Nalbuphine is a mixed opioid agonist/antagonist that blocks the mu opioid receptor and activates the kappa opioid receptor, both of...

### **Addiction Policy Forum Webinar: Neuromodulation: Promising New Approaches to Addressing Substance Use Disorders**

Monday, February 9, 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM ET

Neuromodulation is gaining attention as an effective approach for treating substance use disorders. These techniques work by using electrical, magnetic, or soundwave stimulation to stimulate brain circuits affected by addiction. Research shows encouraging results in reducing craving and relapse risk. During this webinar, leading researchers will provide an overview of neuromodulation, including the different techniques and how they work, and what current science shows about their potential role in addiction treatment. This session is designed for a broad audience and breaks down research in a clear, accessible way, highlighting where the science is today and where it may be headed next.

### **A New Drug is Driving a Dangerous Withdrawal Crisis**

A powerful veterinary sedative called medetomidine is rapidly reshaping the overdose crisis in Philadelphia and placing new strain on hospitals and treatment systems, according to the New York Times. Unlike prior waves of the crisis, this crisis is not defined solely by fatal overdoses but by severe, life-threatening withdrawal. Medetomidine, which is increasingly mixed into the illicit fentanyl supply, causes extreme sedation shortly after use. When it wears off, withdrawal can trigger life-threatening symptoms, including dangerously high heart rate and blood pressure, severe vomiting, tremors, and hallucinations. Many patients...

### **AMA 2025 report on overdose crisis**

The American Medical Association (AMA) released its 2025 report on the nation's overdose epidemic. The main point: While opioid overdose deaths declined last year, the crisis remains widespread and complex, driven by mixing opioids and other substances and an unpredictable illicit drug supply. The details: AMA's policy priorities include enforcing parity laws, removing barriers to treatment for pain and substance use disorder (SUD), and strengthening overdose prevention efforts targeting youth and vulnerable populations. Opioid prescribing: Opioid prescriptions have decreased 52% 2012-2024, but many...

### **Mindfulness Interventions May Reduce Substance Use in Youths**

Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) may help reduce substance use in young people, according to a systematic review of 23 studies. Of these studies, which included nearly 2,300 participants, over two-thirds showed positive results with MBIs compared with both passive and active comparison interventions for both substance use reduction and other pooled substance use outcomes, reported Christopher J. Hammond, MD, PhD, of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, and co-authors in Pediatrics. The results echoed meta-analyses of MBIs in adults with substance use disorders, the authors noted. "While...

### **Kratom: What parents need to know about this risky substance**

Kratom products can be seen at gas stations, vape shops or online. Marketed as "natural" and often sold in forms such as powders, capsules and gummies, kratom is gaining popularity in the U.S. among teens. But while it comes from a plant, that doesn't make it safe. Kratom comes from the leaves of the *Mitragyna speciosa* tree, native to Southeast Asia. Historically, kratom has been used in traditional medicines by brewing it in teas or chewing the leaves. Recently, though, kratom has grown into a large-scale industry in the United States and is now mass produced in a variety of forms. Kratom is most commonly sold as powdered...

### **FDA warns HIV test distributors, supplement firm, and OTC drugmaker**

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has cited several companies for marketing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) serological diagnostic dried blood spot (DBS) card self-collection kits without a marketing authorization. It also cited a

nutritional supplement company for conducting an unauthorized clinical trial, and a drugmaker for failing to comply with current good manufacturing practices (CGMP). On 20 January, FDA published several warning letters, including four warning letters to HIV diagnostic kit-makers in the US and online. Inspectors sent almost identical warning letters to Genovate.com...

### **‘Transformative’ HIV PrEP shot slowly overcomes cost hurdles**

HIV/AIDS activists heralded the approval of a new twice-yearly pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medication last year, but these celebrations were tempered by insurers’ reluctance to cover its exorbitant cost. In the months since, payers are coming around, and more patients have access to this landmark advancement. In June, the Food and Drug Administration approved Yeztugo, an injection of the drug lenacapavir, as a form of HIV PrEP. The drug is manufactured by Gilead Sciences. PrEP medication comprises preventative medications for HIV-negative people at high risk of exposure. Carlos del Rio, co-director of the Emory...

### **One year after US aid freeze, HIV care in Africa is in retreat**

One year ago, U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order to pause all U.S. foreign assistance, unleashing unprecedented disruption to HIV programs around the world. In central Uganda, a warning came over the local radio stations: HIV services would shut down for 90 days, including the provision of lifesaving antiretroviral treatment. Juma Bwanika heard the report and started counting his pills. They would not last three months. In the 13 years since he started the daily treatment to suppress his HIV infection, Bwanika had never missed a dose. But after the announcement, he decided to cut back to one pill every...

### **U.S. Psychedelic Use and Microdosing in 2025**

This is the first report from the 2025 RAND Psychedelics Survey, which was fielded in September 2025 to a probability-based, nationally representative sample[1] of 10,122 adults ages 18 years and older living in the United States at that time. This report presents top-line results on the use of 11 psychedelic substances and detailed information about microdosing (i.e., taking a small fraction of a full dose, often intermittently on a schedule) for psilocybin, LSD, and MDMA. These results should be of interest to those contemplating changes to psychedelics policies, researchers interested in use patterns (especially for microdosing...

### **Study links gambling addiction to altered brain networks for self-control and reward**

A new doctoral dissertation shows that gambling disorder is linked to brain networks involved in self-control and brain reward functions. By combining several brain imaging methods, the research provides new biological insight into the disorder and may point to promising directions for treatment development. Gambling disorder is a condition in which gambling becomes difficult to control and causes harm to well-being, relationships, and daily functioning. Gambling

disorder affects around 1–2% of adults worldwide and, due to its similarities with substance addictions, it is the first behavioral addiction officially...

### **Senate Releases FY2026 Funding Bills for Key Substance Use and Justice Agencies and Programs**

On January 20, 2026, the Senate released a “minibus” legislation appropriation package that included four spending bills, including the fiscal year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor HHS). The Labor HHS bill provides key funding for substance use and mental health agencies and programs across the country. The Senate proposal reflects continued bipartisan support for community-based prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts, with modest increases to select programs. The bill does not include proposals from the FY2026 President’s Budget Request (PBR), which called...

## **Funding Opportunities**



## **GRANTS & FUNDING**

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

RFA-DA-26-055

Accelerating the Pace of Substance Use Research Using Existing Data (R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

## **CAR Member New Publications**

### **Factors Associated With Opioid-Involved Overdose: Descriptive Data From a Randomized Controlled Trial Evaluating Extended-Release Buprenorphine for Perinatal Opioid Use Disorder**

Sara M. Witcraft, PhD, Leah Holcomb, PhD, Yingjia Wei, PhD, Gerald Cochran, MSW, PhD, John T. Winhusen, PhD, Michelle R. Lofwall, MD, Peter R. Martin, MD, Jessica L. Young, MD, Jessica Spinali, RN, and Constance Guille, MD, MSCR

*Substance Use & Addiction Journal*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/29767342251390075>

### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Opioid use disorder (OUD) during pregnancy is a leading contributor to peripartum morbidity and mortality, with overdose deaths rising significantly in recent years. Despite the identification of various factors associated with overdose events, including social, demographic, psychiatric, and neonatal outcomes, the relative contributions of these factors to peripartum overdose history (or lack thereof) remain

unclear. Thus, this study aims to characterize factors associated with lifetime opioid-involved overdose events among currently pregnant individuals receiving buprenorphine (BUP) treatment for OUD.

**Methods:** Treatment-seeking pregnant individuals with an estimated gestational age of 6 to 30 weeks were enrolled in a large multisite randomized controlled trial evaluating 2 BUP formulations for OUD. Participant baseline demographic, substance use, and mental health data were collected using validated measures, and random forest modeling identified key factors associated with lifetime opioid overdose events.

**Results:** The 140 pregnant participants (Mage = 31.2 years, SD = 4.7; 87.1% White) reported an average of 8.7 years (SD = 5.8) of opioid use, with 92.1% endorsing lifetime prescription opioid use and 82.9% reporting heroin use. The average lifetime number of nonfatal opioid overdose events was 4.8 (SD = 12.1); an overdose was reported by 55% of the sample (n = 77). Random forest analysis (area under the receiver operating characteristic curve = 0.797) incorporating sociodemographic, substance use, and mental health characteristics found that the most important factors associated with lifetime overdose events were, in order, lifetime heroin use, trauma exposure, reliance on partners or parents for financial support, depressive symptoms, and lifetime cocaine use.

**Conclusions:** These findings underscore the critical need to address substance use, co-occurring mental health, and socioeconomic challenges that are associated with previous opioid overdose. Identifying and targeting key modifiable overdose risk factors can inform the development of tailored interventions to improve outcomes for this population.

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