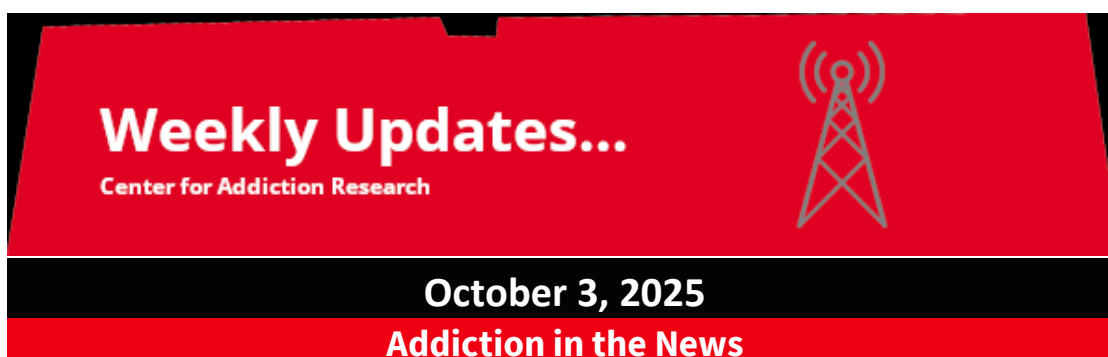


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu) to change your communication preferences. **Please note that the next weekly newsletter will be published Friday, October 17.** 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

HEALing Communities Study Communication Campaign Toolkits

The HEALing Communities Study (HCS) has developed a series of ready-to-use communication campaigns designed to increase awareness about substance use disorders and effective response strategies to help strengthen local prevention, treatment, recovery, and overdose prevention efforts. These free toolkits make it easy for you to share critical information in your community through social media, radio, print materials, and more. Whether you're part of a community coalition, local agency, business, school, university, nonprofit, or faith-based organization, you can use these resources to share information about evidence-based solutions to prevent and reduce opioid overdose deaths and... **(Dr. T. John Winhusen, HEALing Communities Study Co-Principal Investigator for Ohio and CAR Director)**

Hamilton County Specialized Docket Celebrates 30 Years of Changing Lives

Ohio's first specialized docket serving individuals facing drug addiction celebrated 30 years of dedication to the issue during a recent graduation ceremony. Established in 1995, the program at Hamilton County Common Pleas Court has been saving lives, strengthening communities, and offering alternatives to incarceration when appropriate. Since then, three judges have presided over the docket. It was formed under the leadership of retired Judge Deidra Hair, who garnered the support of legal and community partners to make the program

possible. “Judge Hair set the tone and the road map for the drug court here,” said Judge Nicole Sanders, who currently presides over the docket. “It was a novel...

DeWine signs executive order aimed at preventing overdoses

COLUMBUS, Ohio (WSYX) — Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has signed an executive order that suspends the normal process to allow the Ohio Board of Pharmacy to adopt a new rule expanding access to drug test strips and reagent test kits. The rule removes tests from Ohio’s definition of drug paraphernalia if used to detect the following compounds: Xylazine, Medetomidine, Benzimidazole-opioids (commonly referred to as nitazenes), Benzodiazepine and benzodiazepine-related compounds. Fentanyl test strips were already exempt from being considered drug paraphernalia and showed promise in reducing the number of overdoses related to the synthetic opioid. “Items such as test strips have been shown...

Study reveals surprising attitudes among Ohio primary care providers toward diabetes vs. opioid use disorder treatment

A recent study published in JAMA Network Open, titled "Health Care Professional Willingness to Treat Opioid Use Disorder vs. Type 2 Diabetes in Primary Care," reveals surprising insights into how primary care providers in Ohio perceive and treat opioid use disorder (OUD) differently from other chronic conditions, such as type 2 diabetes. The study, led by Dr. Berkeley Franz of Ohio University, in collaboration with researchers from Rutgers University, The Ohio State University, and NYU, surveyed nearly 400 primary care professionals across Ohio, including physicians, nurse practitioners and physician associates, to assess their interest in and willingness to treat opioid addiction in primary care settings. This focus...

NKY Drug Strike Force to receive over \$137,000 as part of federal grant to fight drug trafficking

Gov. Andy Beshear announced the awarding of more than \$1.4 million in federal grant funding to nine state and local agencies to fight drug trafficking, including more than \$137,000 for the Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force. The Edward J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) will allow Kentucky’s law enforcement agencies, drug task forces and nonprofit organizations to purchase critical resources, provide drug prevention programming to community residents, offer counseling to crime victims, ensure officers receive specialized training, and work with individuals leaving incarceration for successful reentry skills. “Fighting addiction is a team effort that requires work from every single one of us...

National News

Altering one area of the brain could rid alcohol withdrawal symptoms, study finds

By targeting a specific area of the brain, researchers at Washington State University may now hold the key to curbing the debilitating symptoms of alcohol withdrawal that push many people back to drinking. The new study found the answer to

helping people get through alcohol withdrawal may lie in a region of the brain known as the cerebellum. In mice experiencing withdrawal, scientists were able to ease the physical and emotional symptoms by altering brain function in this brain region using both genetic tools and a specialized compound. The findings, published in the journal *Neuropharmacology*, could help...

More men die of overdoses partly because many combine alcohol with drugs

Research conducted at West Virginia University suggests consuming alcohol with fentanyl and other drugs may explain, in part, why more men than women die from unintentional overdoses. Zheng Dai, assistant director of health analytics at the WVU Health Affairs Institute, led the study. "Nationally and in West Virginia, the proportion of men and women actually using illicit substances is about equal, yet far more men are dying from overdoses," Dai said. "We know men are more likely to drink a greater amount of alcohol than women, and in our overdose analysis, we saw men are more likely to drink alcohol while using..."

The move from middle to high school can impact teens' drinking habits, research shows

Students who change schools between eighth and ninth grade are more likely to drink alcohol, according to new research. Adolescents who switched to another school during that time reported significantly higher rates of drinking alcohol than those who remained in the same building, according to recently published research by Northeastern University assistant sociology, criminology and criminal justice professor Cassie McMillan and fourth-year criminology and justice policy Ph.D. student Kaley Jones. The work is published in the journal *Deviant Behavior*. Tobacco use remained the same. "We think (these findings reflect)..."

Study links life adversity to early alcohol abstinence symptoms and possible clinical outcome

Among people in treatment for alcohol dependence, the severity of withdrawal symptoms during early alcohol abstinence may be affected by the life adversity they have experienced, a small study suggests. "Cumulative adversity" is the sum of an individual's challenging and traumatic life circumstances. This chronic wear and tear is associated with a range of health outcomes—including substance use disorders, where the effects of stress are known to underpin craving and relapse. Early abstinence is associated with shifts in mood, anxiety, sleep patterns, cardiovascular function, and other physiological processes. While acute...

Limited use of medications for alcohol use disorder in emergency departments highlights room for growth

Emergency departments may be missing opportunities to identify and treat people for problem alcohol use. A new study published in *Alcohol, Clinical and Experimental Research* found that less than 1% of emergency department patients who screened positive for high-risk drinking received a prescription for a

medication to treat the disorder. More than half of those who did receive a prescription filled it, suggesting that increasing awareness and education among emergency department clinicians may be an effective avenue for improving treatment for people with high-risk drinking. Researchers examined electronic...

Can fruit flies help scientists develop treatments for alcohol use disorder?

The tiny fruit fly could have a mighty impact on identifying optimal treatments for people with alcohol use disorder. A new study confirmed that using fruit flies may help scientists understand the human body's response to certain medications that influence alcohol use patterns. The study, published in *Alcohol, Clinical and Experimental Research*, describes a comprehensive approach to conducting experiments that could help scientists understand how current treatments work and identify more effective medications with fewer side effects. Fruit flies, scientifically known as *Drosophila melanogaster*, possess equivalent genes to...

How alcohol contributes to the epidemic of liver disease

Research has revealed a steep increase in liver disease in recent years. Meanwhile, there is growing evidence of health harms from alcohol, including drinking at levels that were previously considered "moderate." These developments make a persuasive case for viewing alcohol consumption from a public health perspective. As an internal medicine physician and alcohol epidemiologist, I'm interested in the overlap between liver disease and alcohol use among patients and in the general population. As it turns out, these topics are closely related, but maybe in surprising ways. The liver is essential: humans need it to live. The liver...

How frequently young adults use cannabis may predict their binge drinking

Changing cannabis use frequency may predict changes in binge drinking frequency among young adults, according to a new study that illuminates shifts in substance use across early adulthood. The findings imply opportunities for targeted interventions to prevent and treat binge drinking, a behavior linked to a range of negative consequences, including alcohol use disorder (AUD) and high economic costs. More frequent cannabis use during these years is associated with dangerous drinking outcomes. These include binge drinking (4+ drinks on one occasion for women, 5+ for men), which tends to peak during emerging...

Cannabis Product Beats Placebo for Common Chronic Pain

Patients with chronic low back pain experienced clinically significant relief when taking an investigational cannabis extract called VER-01 in a placebo-controlled trial, researchers said. Pain ratings declined by nearly 3 points from a baseline average of 6.0 among patients who took VER-01 for 44 weeks, as well as among those initially randomized to placebo for 12 weeks who then switched to VER-01, according to Matthias Karst, MD, PhD, of Hannover Medical School in Germany, and colleagues. In a final 6-week phase of the study, in which patients seeing substantial relief after 6 months of open-label treatment with the...

Veterans more likely than general population to use all types of tobacco products, including the most harmful

A new study is the first since 2015 to examine differences in tobacco use by product type among military veterans compared to civilians, finding that veterans disproportionately use all commercial tobacco product types, including cigars and cigarettes, which pose a range of serious health risks. For many military members, tobacco use is a normalized activity that continues long after their military service ends, posing a lifelong danger to the health of military veterans. Despite knowledge that tobacco use has been elevated among veterans, most research on this subject relies on decade-old data that does not reveal differences...

Most effective digital interventions to stop smoking identified

Smoking remains one of the most deleterious habits for human health, as it is known to increase the risk of several life-threatening diseases, including lung and throat cancers, heart disease and strokes. While most smokers are well aware of its associated health risks, ceasing this habit can be a very difficult process. Moreover, conventional programs for smoking cessation, such as those based on psychotherapy or nicotine replacement therapy, are not financially or physically accessible for all individuals who wish to stop smoking. In recent years, behavioral scientists and psychologists have been working with engineers to...

Smoking decline linked to fewer newborns with gastroschisis, research finds

A decline in smoking in the general population, including pregnant people, over the last few decades corresponded with a decline in infants born with a birth defect called gastroschisis, according to research presented during the American Academy of Pediatrics 2025 National Conference & Exhibition, held at the Colorado Convention Center Sept. 26–30. Authors of an abstract, "A Declining Incidence of Gastroschisis Parallels Trends in Maternal Smoking Rates in the United States," point to the success of public health efforts to discourage smoking within the general population. Consequently, a decline in maternal smoking prior to...

Experts warn federal cuts may extinguish momentum in tobacco control

A new commentary paper in *Nicotine and Tobacco Research* argues that recent cuts to the National Institutes of Health, including about \$2 billion in terminated research grants and a \$783 million cut to research funding linked to diversity and inclusion initiatives, will have a dramatically negative effect on efforts to combat tobacco usage and health disparities in the United States. The health and economic burdens of commercial nicotine and tobacco use are high, contributing to about 480,000 premature US deaths annually and over \$600 billion in US health care expenses and lost productivity, according to a study cited by the paper's...

Medicaid unwinding associated with less medication treatment for opioid use disorder

The end of pandemic-era enrollment enhancements for Medicaid was associated with a rise in the number of people ending medication treatment for opioid use disorder, as well as a decrease in the number of people beginning such treatment, according to a new RAND study. While some people who were disenrolled from Medicaid may have found other methods to pay for drug treatment, the overall number of those initiating and continuing medication treatment for opioid use disorder declined in the six months after Medicaid unwinding began. The changes were greatest in states that have had the largest disenrollments. The study...

Patients with Opioid Use Disorder Diagnoses Increased 40 Percent from 2021 to 2024

NEW YORK, Sept. 30, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Nationally, among the commercially insured population, patients with opioid use disorder diagnoses showed an overall increase from 2021 to 2024, according to FAIR Health's Opioid Tracker. In 2021, there were 386 patients with opioid use disorder diagnoses per 100,000 patients, while in 2024 there were 539, an increase of 39.8 percent. This and other findings were reported today when FAIR Health released its annual update of the Opioid Tracker, a free, interactive tool tracking opioid use disorder among commercially insured patients nationally and state by state. A brief released...

Older adults with HIV may be facing unequal burden in the opioid crisis

Older adults with HIV are prescribed opioids at a higher rate and are more likely to have indicators of opioid use disorder than those without HIV, according to Rutgers Health researchers. The study, published in *The Lancet Primary Care*, is the first long-term, nationally representative evidence from Medicare data highlighting opioid-related risks among older adults, aged 65 and older, with HIV in the United States. "Our study shows that older adults with HIV are not only more likely to be prescribed opioids but also face a higher risk of opioid use disorder compared to their peers without HIV," said Stephanie Shiau...

Overdose prediction tool for cocaine developed

If there are prediction models for who might be at risk of cancer or diabetes so that they can get attention before it's too late, why can't there be a predictor for overdoses? A new tool designed to help people who use stimulants like cocaine or methamphetamine answers that question, using demographics and other available information to identify who is at risk. The tool's developers at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania hope that it can be used to proactively offer resources and treatment to save lives, and their work is detailed in *JAMA Health Forum*. "Substance use disorder, like other relapsing, chronic..."

Wearable patch can help reduce cravings and stress in early addiction recovery

A new study by investigators from Mass General Brigham shows that a non-drug, wearable device can help people with substance-use disorders (SUD) manage stress, reduce cravings, and lower their risk of relapse in real time. Their results are published in JAMA Psychiatry. "One of the hallmarks of early addiction recovery is poor self-awareness of emotional states," said corresponding author David Eddie, Ph.D., a Mass General Brigham psychologist at the Recovery Research Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital. "People in recovery can experience a lot of stress, but they often don't have great awareness of it or proactively..."

Lasting neurological damage caused by repeated stress may explain addiction risk patterns

Extreme instances of stress can cause lasting changes to the brain itself. This could leave some people more vulnerable to addiction, a University of Mississippi study concludes. Science has long associated stress with risk of substance misuse, but the Ole Miss study may have found a reason for the connection. Alberto Del Arco Gonzalez, associate professor of health, exercise science and recreation management, and Yixin Chen, chair and professor of computer and information science, published their results in the journal eNeuro. The study's insight could explain why some people are more vulnerable to substance use disorders...

A single dose of psilocybin may rewire the brain for lasting relief

Researchers at Penn Medicine have identified specific brain circuits that are impacted by psilocybin -- the active compound found in some psychedelic mushrooms -- which could lead to new paths forward for pain and mental health management options. Chronic pain affects more than 1.5 billion people worldwide and is often deeply entangled with depression and anxiety, creating a vicious cycle that amplifies suffering and impairs quality of life. The study from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania- published today in Nature Neuroscience- offers new insight into ways to disrupt this cycle. "As an..."

When the game doesn't end: Understanding gambling addiction in a tech-driven world

Placing a bet is only a few clicks away. With sports betting apps to online poker rising in popularity across the United States, so has problem gambling and gambling disorder. Research shows that internet searches seeking help for gambling addiction have increased by 23% nationally since 2018 -- the same year a U.S. Supreme Court legalized sports betting. "The level of gambling has grown astronomically across the country, especially in Virginia, so it is not surprising that more people are developing problems from their gambling," said Carolyn E. Hawley, Ph.D., CRC, a professor in the Department of Rehabilitation and...

As sports betting explodes, should states set more limits to stop gambling addiction?

It's hard to promote moderation and financial discipline from the bowels of a casino. But that's what Massachusetts state workers try to do every day, amid the clanging bells and flashing lights of the slot machines. This story was produced in partnership with KFF Health News. At the MGM Springfield in western Massachusetts, these workers, wearing green polos, stand outside their small office, right off the casino floor. Above them the sign reads, "GameSense," the state's signature program to curb problem gambling. A mounted screen cycles through messages such as "Keep sports betting fun. Set a budget and stick to..."

Gen X Older Adults Show High Rates of Ultra-Processed Food Addiction

New research suggests that older adults, particularly Generation X women, have high rates of addiction to ultra-processed foods, such as fast food, sugary drinks and packaged snacks. These products — made with high levels of fat, salt and sugar to maximize their appeal — appear to be catching up with the very first generation, now in their 50s and early 60s, to consume them widely since childhood. The research, published Sept. 29 in the journal *Addiction*, found that 21% of women and 10% of men in Gen X and the last wave of Baby Boomers, met the criteria for ultra-processed food addiction. (Boomers are folks born...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

Other Funding Opportunity:

Learning for Early Careers in Addiction & Development (LEAD) Program

Deadline: December 31, 2025

The Learning for Early Careers in Addiction and Development (LEAD) training program was developed to support the efforts of assistant professors and post-doctoral scholars from all backgrounds to receive funding from NIH as independent scientists and make the transition to leading scholars in the field. The LEAD Program is integrated within the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network (CTN). The CTN provides an enterprise in which NIDA, treatment researchers, and community-based service providers across the country can effectively work toward new treatment options in community-level clinical practice. The LEAD Program uses a team mentoring approach: each LEAD Program scholar works with a CTN primary mentor, while also receiving guidance from a UCSF mentor and a nationally regarded career development mentor. The LEAD training program also includes a funded four-week intensive program at UCSF each summer

where scholars in all stages of the program participate in grant writing and manuscript development workshops to help them obtain grant funding. Other career development workshops might touch on topics that the researchers may encounter later in their careers, such as laboratory management, research leadership, and advanced statistical methods.

UC Foundation Funding Opportunity

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or russeccg@foundation.uc.edu at **least 5 business days before the deadline**, prior to applying to the below opportunity, to ensure coordination and to facilitate assistance with approaches.

Emergency Medicine Foundation Posts Opportunities for Seven Research Awards

Deadline: (Letters of Intent): October 31, 2025, by 6:00 PM ET

The Emergency Medicine Foundation has competitive research awards available in seven areas. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$250,000. Three awards begin with a letter of intent: 1) Investigator Initiated Research Grant: One award of \$250,000 will be made, 2) Early Career Research Development Grant: One \$150,000 award will be made, and 3) EMF/ Fisher & Paykel High Flow Therapy Research Grant: One \$100,000 award will be made. If invited, proposals will be due December 12. Proposals for four other grant opportunities not requiring a letter of intent also have a December 12 deadline: Pilot Research Grants: Up to three awards of \$100,000 each will be made, Implementation Research Grant: one or two awards of \$25,000 each will be made, Resident Research Grants: Up to four awards of \$10,000 each will be made, and Medical Student Research Grant: up to four awards of \$5,000 each will be made. For the application guidelines for each award, see the funder's website.

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