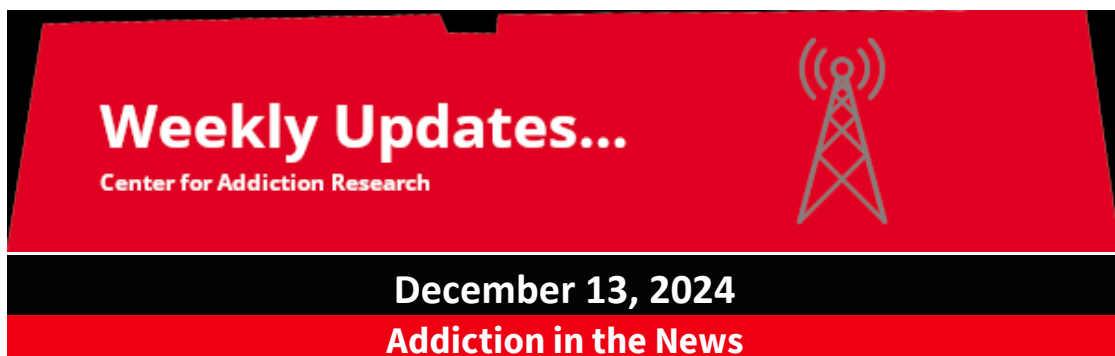


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 12.13.2024

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**

#### **Research Rising Star Awardee**

The College of Medicine celebrates Research Rising Stars who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to health-related research. A Research Rising Star is in the top tier of career benchmarks among peers. Congratulations to **Dr. Jayme McReynolds**, Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Physiology, and Neurobiology, chosen as a Research Rising Star recipient. Dr. McReynolds received her PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Texas at Dallas before completing a postdoctoral fellowship at Marquette University in the Biomedical Sciences Department. She was awarded a NIDA K01 fellowship and joined the Pharmacology, Physiology, and Neurobiology department at the University of Cincinnati in November 2019 as a tenure-track Assistant Professor. She has been highly productive in her career with 23 peer-reviewed primary research papers and reviews and an H-index of 20 and serves as a Section Editor at the journal *Physiology & Behavior*. She has established her research program at UC investigating the neurobiological mechanisms that underlie the impact of stress on addiction-related behavior using a combination of innovative behavioral, molecular, and physiological techniques. She was awarded a R37 Early-Stage Investigator MERIT Award from NIDA in 2024 as recognition of her standing and potential as a researcher in her field. **(Dr. Jayme McReynolds, CAR Member)**

### **Pharmacies prevail in appeal of \$650-million opioid award in Ohio**

(Reuters) -Ohio's top court ruled on Tuesday that pharmacy chain operators CVS, Walmart and Walgreens could not be held liable for fueling an opioid epidemic in two counties in the state that won a \$650.9-million judgment against them. The Ohio Supreme Court held on a 5-2 vote that a state law barred Lake and Trumbull counties' claims that the dispensing of addictive pain medications by the pharmacy chains created a public nuisance that the companies should be forced to address. Justice Joseph Deters, writing for the majority, said the court recognized that the deadly epidemic had touched the lives of people throughout Ohio and "undoubtedly has far-reaching consequences for their communities and...

### **National News**

#### **U-shaped association seen for alcohol consumption, cardiometabolic disease**

There is a U-shaped association between alcohol consumption and coronary heart disease (CHD) and type 2 diabetes (T2D) but no evidence for a causal association, according to a study published online Nov. 24 in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. Rachel L. Kember, Ph.D., from Crescenz Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Philadelphia, and colleagues conducted two retrospective nested case-control studies of 33,053 CHD and 28,278 T2D cases matched to five controls each to examine observed and genetically proxied associations between alcohol consumption and the incidence of CHD and T2D in African...

#### **What an addiction expert says about drinking alcohol during the holidays**

Dr. Christopher Kahler always wanted a career exploring "how people make meaning out of their lives." He planned to teach philosophy or literature. But when he got a job working with teens recovering from substance misuse, a different question emerged: How can people turn their lives around in a meaningful way? "I realized there was so much I didn't know," Kahler said. "How do you know what each person in recovery needs? And what about people who don't fit into a 12-step program or aren't ready to quit drinking?" So Kahler got a doctorate in clinical psychology and set out to learn everything about addiction. Today, he's a...

#### **FDA asks Biden administration to limit nicotine in tobacco products**

In what appears to be a last-ditch effort to limit the harms of smoking before its term ends, the Biden administration has proposed a rule that would significantly lower the amount of nicotine in tobacco products. The agency's efforts to counter the dangers of the addictive chemical stretch back to 2018, when it first proposed the idea. Then, FDA Commissioner Dr. Robert Califf went even further in 2022 and announced that the agency was developing a rule that would require tobacco companies to reduce the amount of nicotine in cigarettes. The next step in that effort took place Tuesday when the FDA finally submitted its refined...

### **Nearly 50% of young vapers quit with phone coaching, study finds**

Quitline coaching over the phone helped almost half of young people who vape ditch the habit, potentially improving their health and decreasing the chances they'll transition to cigarettes, according to a new study. The finding is promising and provides critical evidence about vaping cessation, an area with limited research to date, said Liz Klein, a researcher at The Ohio State University College of Public Health and co-author of the study, which appears in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine Dec. 10, 2024. "This study provides hope that young adult vapers want to quit and can be successful in breaking their addiction..."

### **Mexican Congress adopts ban on e-cigarettes**

Mexico's Congress on Wednesday approved a constitutional reform banning the production, distribution and sale of e-cigarettes, joining a widening clampdown on a device promoted as less harmful than smoking. The Senate overwhelmingly backed a bill promoted by the government, which was approved last week by the lower house of parliament. The constitutional reform must now be approved by the congresses of all of Mexico's 32 states before taking effect. The bill bans e-cigarettes, including disposable vapes, and also bans the illicit use of fentanyl, a powerful painkiller driving an opioid epidemic in the United...

### **U.S. Overdose Deaths Fell 17% in Just One Year**

In news that suggest the U.S. opioid epidemic may be easing, drug overdose deaths fell 17% between July 2023 and July 2024. Per new data released Wednesday by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 94,000 people died from drug overdoses (ODs) during that 12-month period, down from more than 113,000 deaths between July 2022 and July 2023. The data represents "the largest recorded reduction in overdose deaths, ever, and this is no coincidence," Neera Tanden, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, told STAT. Efforts to distribute the OD reversal drug naloxone account for much of this...

### **US overdose deaths linked to fentanyl may be declining**

Deaths from fentanyl-linked drug overdoses have begun to decline in the United States, but the crisis is far from over and those numbers could easily rise again, a new government report shows. About 70% of fatal drug overdoses recorded in 2023 involved fentanyl, the research showed. The number of these deaths dropped 7.8% nationwide in the second half of 2023 compared to the second half of 2022, new data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found. However, there were several caveats to the findings: While fentanyl-linked deaths fell in the Northeast, South and Midwest, they surged in the West, according to...

### **Could Ozempic treat addiction?**

In 2018, Matt Christensen kicked heroin by replacing drugs with drinking. When he stopped drinking in 2022, he turned to food. He put on 95 pounds. His doctor recommended he try Wegovy, part of a class of drugs known as GLP-1 receptor

agonists, to help him lose weight. Eventually he switched to a different drug called Zepbound, which targets both GLP-1 and GIP agonists. The drugs worked. Subscribe to The Post Most newsletter for the most important and interesting stories from The Washington Post. But a funny thing happened on his weight-loss journey: His cravings for food had diminished but so had his cravings...

### **MRI study reveals brain volume changes in opioid users**

Researchers at the Yale School of Medicine found structural and functional alterations in specific brain regions of individuals with opioid use disorder. The study's results were published today in *Radiology*. Opioids are a class of drugs that include synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, prescription pain relievers like oxycodone, and illegal narcotics, including heroin. Opioids have a high potential for misuse, and opioid use is a major contributor to drug overdoses in the U.S. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, in 2021, approximately 2.5 million adults in the U.S. had opioid use disorder. Provisional data...

### **Researchers identify new therapeutic strategy for fentanyl overdoses**

Scientists have revealed that opioid receptors outside the brain play a key role in the hypoventilation caused by fentanyl overdoses, paving the way for better treatments. The study, forthcoming in *eLife*, offers compelling evidence demonstrating that fentanyl-induced respiratory depression in rodents can be reversed with a drug that acts only on peripheral opioid receptors. *eLife*'s editors added that these preclinical findings reshape our understanding of opioid-related effects on breathing and oxygen availability and have significant therapeutic implications given that medications currently used to reverse...

### **Hospitals Gave Patients Meds During Childbirth, Then Reported Them For Positive Drug Tests**

Amairani Salinas was 32 weeks pregnant with her fourth child in 2023 when doctors at a Texas hospital discovered that her baby no longer had a heartbeat. As they prepped her for an emergency cesarean section, they gave her midazolam, a benzodiazepine commonly prescribed to keep patients calm. A day later, the grieving mother was cradling her stillborn daughter when a social worker stopped by her room to deliver another devastating blow: Salinas was being reported to child welfare authorities. A drug test had turned up traces of benzodiazepine — the very medication that staff had administered before wheeling...

### **Rhode Island set to open first supervised consumption site for illicit drugs outside NYC**

A Rhode Island nonprofit is set to open a state-sanctioned site for illicit drug use this week, making it just the second organization in the U.S. to officially offer supervised consumption and the first to do so outside New York City. The nonprofit, Project Weber/RENEW, will hold a ribbon-cutting event for its new facility in Providence, R.I., on Dec. 10, and is expected to begin offering the controversial

harm reduction service upon receiving final licensing approval soon after. The opening represents a long-awaited expansion of supervised consumption, which aims to prevent death by allowing drug users to consume under...

### **AI can help us choose words more carefully when talking about addiction**

Drug addiction has been one of America's growing public health concerns for decades. Despite the development of effective treatments and support resources, few people who are suffering from a substance use disorder seek help. Reluctance to seek help has been attributed to the stigma often attached to the condition. So, in an effort to address this problem, researchers at Drexel University are raising awareness of the stigmatizing language present in online forums and they have created an artificial intelligence tool to help educate users and offer alternative language. Presented at the recent Conference on Empirical...

### **Brain scans show vulnerability to gaming addiction in teens**

Playing video games is a rite of passage for many adolescents, but for some, it could also be the first step to a gaming addiction. "A number one concern for parents of children and teenagers is how much screen time and how much gaming is enough gaming and how to figure out where to draw the line," said John Foxe, Ph.D., director of the Del Monte Institute for Neuroscience at the University of Rochester and co-author of a study published in the Journal of Behavioral Addictions that discovered a key marker in the brain of teens who develop gaming addiction symptoms. "These data begin to give us some answers."...

## **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 \(R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-DA-26-056](#)

[Accelerating the Pace of Substance Use Research Using Existing Data \(R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-OD-25-001](#)

[High-Priority Research in Tobacco Regulatory Science \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-299](#)

[Interventions to Address Disparities in Liver Diseases and Liver Cancer \(R01 - Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-100](#)

[Pilot Health Services and Economic Research on the Treatment of Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use Disorders \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[RFA-DA-26-003](#)

[Research to Address Systemic and Structural Barriers and Facilitators to Improve the HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\) Care Continuum for People Who Use Substances \(R01 Clinical Trials Required\)](#)

[RFA-DA-26-004](#)

[Research to Address Systemic and Structural Barriers and Facilitators to Improve the HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\) Care Continuum for People Who Use Substances \(R34 Clinical Trials Required\)](#)

[PA-25-245](#)

[Alcohol Health Services Research \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-192](#)

[Alcohol Health Services Research \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PA-25-163](#)

[Alcohol Treatment, Pharmacotherapy, and Recovery Research \(R01 Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PAR-25-193](#)

[Alcohol Treatment, Pharmacotherapy, and Recovery Research \(R34 Clinical Trial required\)](#)

[PAR-24-330](#)

[Interventions to Reduce Sleep Health Disparities \(R01 - Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-154](#)

[HEAL Initiative-Early-Stage Discovery of New Pain Targets Within the Understudied Druggable Proteome \(R03 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

### **UC Foundation Funding Opportunities**

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or [carol.russell@uc.edu](mailto:carol.russell@uc.edu) **at least 5 business days before the deadline**, prior to applying to the below opportunities, to ensure coordination and to facilitate assistance with approaches.

## **McKnight Foundation Invites Applications for Neuroscience Scholar Awards**

**Deadline: January 13, 2024**

The program aims to support exceptional young scientists in the early stages of establishing an independent laboratory and research career. Up to 10 scholars will receive an award of \$225,000 (\$75,000 a year for up to three years) in support of research with the potential to have an important influence on the study of the brain. Applicants for the awards program must demonstrate their ability to solve significant problems in neuroscience, which may include translating basic research into clinical practice. To be eligible, candidates must work as an independent investigator at a nonprofit research institution in the United States and hold a faculty position at the rank of assistant professor; they must have served at that rank for less than four years at the application deadline (exceptions may be made for parental leave).

## **Klingenstein Philanthropies Accepting Applications for Neuroscience Fellowships**

**Deadline: February 1, 2024**

Klingenstein Philanthropies invites applications for the Klingenstein Fellowship Awards in Neuroscience. The award aims to support innovative research by early career investigators. Research should have relevance for understanding the mechanisms underlying neurological and behavioral disorders that may lead to improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of these disorders. The organization recognizes, however, that some of the most important contributions toward disease cures can come from basic research, without an immediate understanding of their relationship to disease, so it also supports basic research. Several areas within neuroscience are of particular interest:

- Cellular and molecular neuroscience: Studies of the mechanisms of neuronal excitability and development, and of the genetic basis of behavior.
- Neural systems: Studies of the integrative function of the nervous system.
- Translational research: Studies to improve our understanding of the causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of neurological and psychiatric disorders.

Awardees will receive \$100,000 per year for three years (\$300,000 total), which may be used for salary support, research assistants, equipment, or for any other purpose that promotes the scientific activities of the fellow. The award is for exclusive use by the fellow and may not be used for institutional or departmental support. Priority will be given to candidates who may not have received substantial funding from other private awards yet have highly promising scientific careers. Neuroscientists from underrepresented and minoritized groups are encouraged to apply. To be eligible, investigators must hold a PhD and/or an MD, and have completed all research training, including post-doctoral training.

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