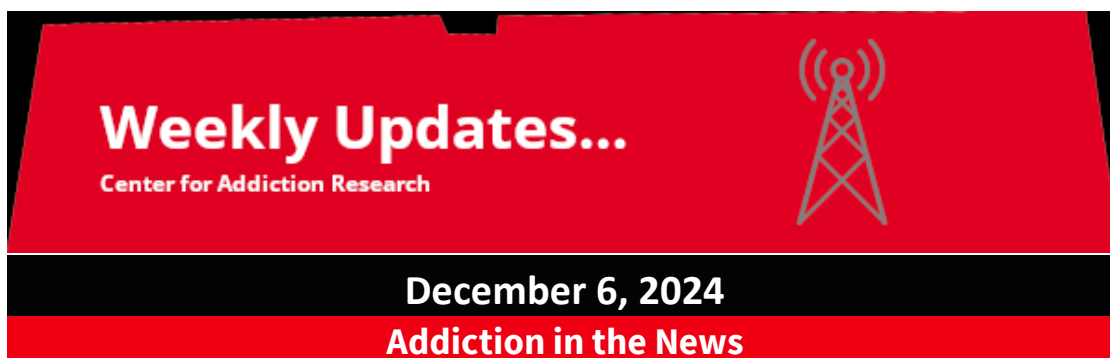


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)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

Narcan vending machines help communities save fentanyl users' lives

United Press International, Yahoo News and MSN highlighted research from the University of Cincinnati's Daniel Arendt in a story on the rise of harm reduction vending machines across the country. Cincinnati nonprofit Caracole, in partnership with the University of Cincinnati, has operated a machine outside of its headquarters since 2021. The machine provides an anonymous way for anyone in the community to access free supplies including naloxone, the drug that can be used to reverse an overdose, safe injection kits, safe smoking kits and more. Arendt, PharmD, has been tracking the machine's use since its inception, with the latest reports showing naloxone accessed from the machine led to the reversal...

Kentucky Attorney General targets another big pharmacy benefit manager in opioid-related lawsuit

FRANKFORT, Ky. -- Kentucky's attorney general has expanded an opioid-related lawsuit to target another big pharmacy benefit manager that he claims contributed to the state's deadly addiction crisis. OptumRx has been added as a new defendant in the suit that was filed two months ago, Attorney General Russell Coleman said Tuesday. His claims against Optum and its affiliated organizations are similar to those initially made against Express Scripts, which remains a defendant in the case. The Republican attorney general accused Optum of playing a central role in what he called the reckless promotion, dispensing and oversupply of opioids. OptumRx controls a pharmacy network consisting of about 67,000 retail pharmacy...

National News

The rise of 'sober curiosity:' Why Gen Zers are reducing their alcohol consumption

Generation Z is leading a significant shift in drinking habits. In fact, compared to preceding generations, Generation Z may be the soberest generation yet. Members of Gen Z consume about one-third less beer and wine than previous generations. They are also shifting toward alcohol-free beverages at a significantly higher rate. This trend, first observed in North America in the early 2000s, has since become a global phenomenon. Recent Gallup data shows a 10 percent decline in alcohol use among U.S. adults aged 18 to 34 in the last decade. Across the Atlantic, a United Kingdom report found that consumers aged 20 to 24 are...

WeightWatchers combined with weight loss medications may alter alcohol consumption, study finds

Researchers at Henry Ford Health, collaborating with WeightWatchers International, report that more than 40% of individuals using popular weight loss medications while participating in a WeightWatchers clinic decreased their alcohol use. Previous associations have been noted between specific drugs and a lower incidence of alcohol use disorder. Health-conscious behavioral changes in weight management programs are also linked to reduced alcohol consumption. Examining alcohol use among individuals using various medications for weight loss could offer insights into behavioral versus medication effects on alcohol reduction. In...

'I don't feel your pain': How alcohol increases aggression

Alcohol's ability to increase people's pain threshold is one reason that drinking also leads to more aggressive behavior, a new study suggests. Researchers found that the less pain that study participants felt after drinking an alcoholic beverage, the more pain they were willing to inflict on someone else. "We've all heard the idiom 'I feel your pain,'" said study co-author Brad Bushman, professor of communication at The Ohio State University. "But if intoxicated people can't feel their own pain, they might be less likely to feel empathy when others feel pain, and that could lead them to be more aggressive." The study was published in the...

Alcohol use disorder, alcohol-associated liver disease up in older U.S. adults

The prevalence of and mortality from alcohol-associated liver disease (ALD) and alcohol use disorder (AUD) increased among older U.S. adults, according to a study presented at The Liver Meeting, the annual meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases, held from Nov. 15 to 19 in San Diego. Pojsakorn Danpanichkul, M.D., from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Lubbock, and colleagues examined temporal shifts in both the prevalence and mortality rates associated with ALD and AUD among older U.S. adults using data from the Global Burden of Disease Study (2010 to 2019). The...

Perceived social acceptability of driving while under the influence may sway young adult behavior

Half of 18- to 25-year-olds believe that the average young adult drives or rides in a car at least once a month while the driver is under the influence of alcohol and cannabis. Yet, 70% believe that both driving and riding in a car while the driver is under the influence of both alcohol and cannabis is totally unacceptable, and 3% of young adults report driving under the simultaneous influence of alcohol and cannabis, according to a study just published in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. The findings indicate that perceptions of social norms may sway young adults' behavior related to driving under the influence of alcohol...

FDA gives green light to PTSD marijuana study in veterans

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) this week authorized a long-delayed clinical trial to test whether smoking marijuana can be used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in veterans. The trial, sponsored by the nonprofit Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), has been blocked by the FDA since 2021. The agency had raised a variety of objections, including that allowing people to inhale high-potency cannabis was dangerous to their health. The FDA also objected to the study's "self-titration" dosing method, which will allow participants to smoke as much cannabis as they feel they need to...

Study finds perceptions of parent cannabis use shape teen attitudes

Teens who think their parents use cannabis are more likely to hold favorable attitudes toward the drug and to consider trying it themselves, according to a new Washington State University study. The research, published in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, also reveals that parental monitoring and the closeness of parent-child relationships play crucial roles in adolescents' views about cannabis, often with distinct effects based on the parent's gender. The findings could ultimately help parents who use cannabis come up with more effective strategies for communicating about the health risks of the drug with their children...

Psychosis symptoms found to precede adolescent cannabis use

Washington University in St. Louis researchers have found that adolescents who use cannabis report more psychosis spectrum symptoms and greater distress from these symptoms, suggesting that shared vulnerability and self-medication contribute to the association between cannabis use and psychosis risk. Cannabis use among adolescents has been associated with a higher risk of psychosis, with users being two to four times more likely to develop psychosis than non-users. Early initiation during adolescence is linked to earlier onset of psychotic disorders, more severe symptoms, and a greater likelihood of...

What's the Status of the Proposed Ban on Menthol Cigarettes?

Biden administration officials have many regulations they'd like to finalize before the end of the president's term, but it's unclear whether a proposed rule banning

menthol cigarettes is among them. The proposed menthol cigarette ban was originally announced in April 2022^{opens in a new tab or window}. At the time, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a statement that the rule "would help prevent children from becoming the next generation of smokers and help adult smokers quit. Additionally, the proposed [rule represents] an important step to advance health equity by significantly reducing tobacco-related...

Supreme Court won't hear Big Tobacco's challenge to cigarette warning labels

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to hear a major tobacco company's challenge to a federal law that would mandate graphic images on cigarette packs. Some of the proposed images include a woman with a large lump on her neck alongside the message "WARNING: Smoking causes head and neck cancer;" lungs blackened by smoking; and feet darkened by smoking-linked circulatory problems. The R.J. Reynolds tobacco company had filed an appeal with the Supreme Court after the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the warnings do not violate the First Amendment, the Associated Press reported. In its...

People who use vapes as well as cigarettes are less likely to quit and often switch to just smoking, finds study

People who use both vapes and cigarettes are less likely to quit compared to people who only smoke or only vape, according to a study published in ERJ Open Research. Instead, the research suggests that over time, most of these 'dual users' tend to revert to only smoking cigarettes. The researchers say their findings suggest that taking up vaping while continuing to smoke will probably not help people to stop smoking. The study, by researchers from Germany, the U.S. and Denmark, was authored by Josef Hamoud from the University Medical Center Göttingen, Germany. It is a systematic review and meta-analysis, meaning...

FDA battles vaping industry at the Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court takes up the issue of vaping and e-cigarette regulation on Monday. If you don't know much about vaping, be assured that teenagers do. For the uninitiated, vaping is the inhaling of an aerosol mist from an electronic cigarette or other similar device, which heats up a liquid containing nicotine to create a vapor that looks like smoke. It's an alternative that helps some smokers get off more damaging tobacco cigarettes, but it's also a product that has become increasingly popular with middle- and high-school kids. William Schultz, who served for five years as the FDA's deputy commissioner for policy in...

Flavored vapes behind big surge in U.S. e-cigarette sales

E-cigarettes flew off store shelves between 2019 and 2023, and 80% were in youth-friendly flavors like fruit, candy, mint and menthol. In all, e-cigarette sales rose 47% over the period, according to a new report from the CDC Foundation and Truth Initiative that called on more states to restrict sales of flavored vapes. The report noted that sales restrictions and enforcement measures in Massachusetts reduced

sales of flavored e-cigarettes by more than 98% in retail stores. California and New York have made similar efforts to curb sales. "While the latest data from the CDC Foundation and Truth Initiative show a dangerous rise...

UK law to phase out smoking clears first hurdle

British lawmakers on Tuesday voted in favor of a world-leading ban that aims to gradually phase out smoking by preventing young people from ever being able to buy cigarettes. In the first parliamentary vote on the proposals, 415 MPs voted in favor of progressing the bill to the next stage of the legislative process, with 47 MPs voting against. The UK's Tobacco and Vapes Bill would prevent anyone born after January 1, 2009 from legally smoking by gradually raising the age at which tobacco can be bought. The government has said it is aimed at creating Britain's first "smoke-free generation". The proposals come after New...

After youth vaping surge, the U.K. moves to ban disposable e-cigarettes

LONDON — The stacks of brightly colored disposable e-cigarettes, touting flavors like cotton candy ice and greengrape melon and often looming over the not-dissimilar-looking candy displays, have become a commonplace sight in convenience stores in both the U.S. and the U.K. But here, they're on their way out. The U.K. is moving to ban disposable vapes starting next summer, part of a broader policy push that will also prevent anyone now 15 years or younger from ever being able to buy tobacco products, even once they become adults. The aim — with smoking still killing about 80,000 people nationally every year — is to...

Vaping Causes Immediate Effects on Vascular Function

CHICAGO — Researchers have identified acute effects of cigarette and e-cigarette smoking on vascular function, even without nicotine. The results of the ongoing research are being presented next week at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). E-cigarettes, also known as vapes, are battery-operated devices that heat a liquid to produce an aerosol, which is then inhaled into the lungs. Vapes contain significantly fewer chemicals and toxins than are found in tobacco smoke. As a result, e-cigarettes are believed by many to be less harmful than cigarette smoking. Vapes also come in various flavors...

Less-potent fentanyl pills may be playing a role in decrease of US overdose deaths, DEA says

The US Drug Enforcement Administration says that less fentanyl is present in the nation's illicit pill supply and that is helping drive down overdose deaths in the United States. But experts say that there are limitations to this claim and that many other factors are probably playing a role. About 5 out of every 10 fentanyl pills that the agency tested this year had lethal doses of the synthetic opioid painkiller fentanyl, down from about 7 in 10 last year, DEA Administrator Anne Milgram said last week at a summit for families who have lost a loved one to a fentanyl overdose. Federal data also shows that overdose deaths dropped nearly...

Opioid use treatment at intervention clinics continues to rise for third year

Opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment continued to increase in intervention clinics in the third year of implementation of the Massachusetts office-based addiction treatment (OBAT) model of nurse care management for OUD, according to a study published online Nov. 22 in JAMA Network Open. Gwen T. Lapham, Ph.D., M.P.H., from the Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute in Seattle, and colleagues compared OUD medication treatment in intervention and usual care clinics over three years of implementation of the OBAT model of nurse care management for OUD in a preplanned secondary analysis of a cluster...

Extended-release buprenorphine for opioid use disorder could save lives in correctional settings

Opioid use disorder (OUD), which contributes to the ongoing overdose crisis claiming over 21 lives across Canada a day, is even more severe within correctional settings. In North America, OUD is a critical public health concern among incarcerated populations, with individuals being up to 129 times more likely to die from an overdose within the first two weeks of release from custody than the general population. To better understand treatment best practices for this high-risk, and often overlooked population, researchers at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) have conducted the first comprehensive review...

Hello Buprenorphine, Step Into My Practice

After years of alarming increases in opioid overdose deaths, the U.S. finally saw a 1-year decline from 84,000 to 81,000 in 2023. While the marginal drop is encouraging, we cannot rest on this achievement or count on it to continue. Too many people are still dying, and much more needs to be done. The question is what? A crucial first step is to overcome widespread physician hesitancy to prescribe buprenorphine, a medicine that for years has proven successful in curbing opioid use disorder (OUD) and reducing the risk of overdose. Despite robust scientific evidence, many physicians and advanced practice providers don't...

Rats' reactions to cocaine and aversion offer insights into addiction

Consuming addictive substances often involves an unpleasant experience, like using a needle, ingesting a bitter substance or inhaling smoke. These distasteful experiences—known as aversive cues—and our initial reactions to them are pivotal to understanding who will become an addict, said University of Texas at El Paso biologist Travis Moschak, Ph.D. "Aversive cues matter from the very first exposure," Moschak said. But until now, he said, there hasn't been a good animal model to study this concept. Moschak is the lead author of a new study published this month in the journal Drug and Alcohol Dependence that...

Epilepsy medication shows promise in reducing cocaine use in rats

Substance use disorders are notoriously difficult to treat, as it is challenging to intervene in a drug's effect on the brain's reward pathway without interfering with the pathway's normal function. In a University of Arizona Health Sciences study, researchers identified a drug that reduced the desire for cocaine in a murine model while keeping the brain's reward pathways for sugar intact. "For more than 20 years, addiction sciences researchers have been trying to come up with a treatment to reduce the propensity of people to want to use drugs. The problem is that the same areas of the brain that are turned on by addictive drugs...

In a first-of-its-kind meeting, doctors discuss how to treat addicts' tranquilizer wounds

Patients addicted to opioids are arriving at ERs with deep wounds that expose their bones. Some have lost multiple limbs. And many ultimately are leaving hospitals against medical advice, with severe, untreated skin lesions, insisting they can't bear the withdrawal from tranquilizer—the drug that caused their wounds in the first place. Those were among the stories shared by doctors from Philadelphia's major health systems as they compared notes for the first time on the medical consequences of tranquilizer—the street term for xylazine, an animal tranquilizer that has exploded across the city's illicit opioid supply. At a weekend...

Researchers investigate half-life of xylazine to advance care for overdose patients on the drug

A novel study published in the journal, *Clinical Chemistry*, has found that it takes the human body much longer than previously thought to clear xylazine—one of the most popular emerging drugs of abuse in the U.S. This much-needed insight into how the body processes xylazine could improve treatment of overdose patients who've taken it. Xylazine has traditionally been used in veterinary practice as a tranquilizer, but between 2019 and 2022, detection of xylazine in fentanyl-associated overdose deaths soared by 276%, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is particularly...

Telemedicine and peer support show promise in treating hepatitis C in rural areas

New research reveals a dramatic improvement in diagnosing and curing people living with hepatitis C in rural communities using both telemedicine and support from peers with lived experience in drug use. The study, published today in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, outlines the results of a randomized controlled trial led by Oregon Health & Science University in seven rural counties in Oregon. The study enlisted people with lived experience in substance use to meet individuals who use drugs, test them for hepatitis C, and then offer them treatment through telehealth or referral to a physical clinic. The results were...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[PAR-26-001](#)

[Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment or Prevention \(SBIRT/P\) for alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs \(ATOD\) use and misuse in adult populations that experience health disparities \(R01, Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PAR-25-261](#)

[NIDA Avant-Garde Program for HIV and Substance Use Disorder Research \(DP1 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAS-25-208](#)

[HIV Prevention and Alcohol \(R01 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[PAS-25-161](#)

[HIV Prevention and Alcohol \(R34 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-159](#)

[Prevention and Intervention Approaches for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-158](#)

[Prevention and Intervention Approaches for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(R61/R33 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-25-278](#)

[Advancing Learning Health Care Research in Outpatient Mental Health Treatment Settings \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[NOT-DA-24-052](#)

[Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for NIDA REI: Reaching Equity at the Intersection of HIV and Substance Use: Novel Approaches to Address HIV Related Health Disparities in Underserved Racial and/or Ethnic Populations \(R01\)](#)

[NOT-DA-24-051](#)

[Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for NIDA REI: Reaching Equity at the Intersection of HIV and Substance Use: Novel Approaches to Address HIV Related Health Disparities in Underserved Racial and/or Ethnic Populations \(R34\)](#)

[RFA-MH-26-110](#)

[Role of T-Cells in HIV CNS Reservoir Seeding, Persistence, and Neuropathogenesis \(R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-MH-26-111](#)

[Role of T-Cells in HIV CNS Reservoir Seeding, Persistence, and Neuropathogenesis \(R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-DA-26-016](#)

[Medical Devices for Pediatric Population Affected by Substance Use and Addiction \(R43 - Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[RFA-DA-26-017](#)

[Medical Devices for Pediatric Population Affected by Substance Use and Addiction \(R41 - Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[NOT-DA-24-061](#)

[Notice of Early Expiration and Reissue of RFA-DA-25-056, "Establishing a Center for the Advancement of Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Pharmacotherapeutics through Training and Preclinical Support \(U54 Clinical Trials Not Allowed\)"](#)

UC Foundation Funding Opportunity

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or carol.russell@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.

Pilot Grants Advance Emergency Medicine Research Careers, Patient Care

Deadline: January 10, 2025, 6:00 PM ET

The Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF) has issued a request for proposals for its Pilot Research Grant program, which is intended to provide “starter” or pilot funding for preliminary data to help initiate a successful line of research that will ultimately lead to a larger project and result in a subsequent “K of R” grant funding. Grants of up to \$100,000 will be awarded. The program is designed to lay groundwork for a project that will eventually meaningfully impact emergency care research and is intended for a broad audience, including both clinical, translational, and basic science researchers. Feasibility, and high risk/high reward applications are encouraged. EMF encourages application partnerships between research universities and community emergency departments along with the engagement of operational and policy partners. EMF priorities include value of emergency medicine, health policy, safety/quality/prevention of error, emergency physician wellness, emergency physician workforce, practice of emergency medicine, health disparities, education research, and basic science. The principal investigator must have a primary faculty appointment in emergency medicine (this includes pediatric emergency medicine). The applicant is required to demonstrate that the project will be successfully completed at their institution. The foundation aims to promote education and research that develops career emergency medicine researchers, improves patient care, and provides the basis for effective health policy.

CAR Member New Publications

CTN-0138: adaptation, implementation, and cluster randomized trial of a Community Pharmacy-Based Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Opioid Risk Assessment Tool—a protocol paper

Gerald T. Cochran, Jennifer L. Brown, Ziji Yu, Adam J. Gordon, Stacey Frede, Clinton Hardy, Melissa Castora-Binkley, Felicity Homsted, Lisa A. Marsch, August F. Holtyn & T. John Winhusen

Addiction Science & Clinical Practice

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13722-024-00514-1>

ABSTRACT

Background: As the opioid epidemic continues to have a major negative impact across the US, community pharmacies have come under scrutiny from legal systems attempting to hold them accountable for their role in over dispensing and lack of patient intervention. While the most available tool for monitoring patients' opioid use is Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMP), these do not provide pharmacists with actionable information and decision support. Our study addresses this gap through three objectives: [1] incorporate validated opioid risk metric thresholds into a PDMP platform to create the Opioid Risk Reduction Clinical Decision Support (ORRCDS) tool; [2] assess ORRCDS' ability to reduce patient opioid risk; [3] assess ORRCDS' sustainability and viability for broader dissemination in community pharmacy.

Methods: For objective 1, our team is partnering with leadership from the largest US PDMP organization and a top-five pharmacy chain to implement ORRCDS into the pharmacy chain's workflow following the Guideline Implementation with Decision Support (GUIDES) framework. For objective 2, our team will conduct a type-1 implementation mixed methods study using a 2-arm parallel group clustered randomized design. We anticipate enrolling ~ 6,600 patients with moderate and high opioid use risk during the 6-month enrollment phase across 80 pharmacies. This sample size will provide 96.3% power to detect a 5% or greater difference in responder rate between the intervention and control arm. Responders are patients with moderate-risk at baseline who reduce to low-risk or those with high-risk at baseline who reduce to moderate or low-risk at 180 days post last intervention. To accomplish objective 3, we will use the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) to develop and execute cross-sectional qualitative interviews with pharmacists (n = 15), pharmacy leaders (n = 15), and PDMP leaders (n = 15) regarding long term adoption and sustainability of the ORRCDS tool.

Conclusions: A PDMP tool that addresses moderate- and high-risk opioid use is not available in community pharmacy. This study will implement ORRCDS in a large retail pharmacy chain that will include additional screening and guidance to pharmacy staff to address risky opioid medication use. Our results will make critical advancements for protecting patient health and addressing the opioid epidemic.

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