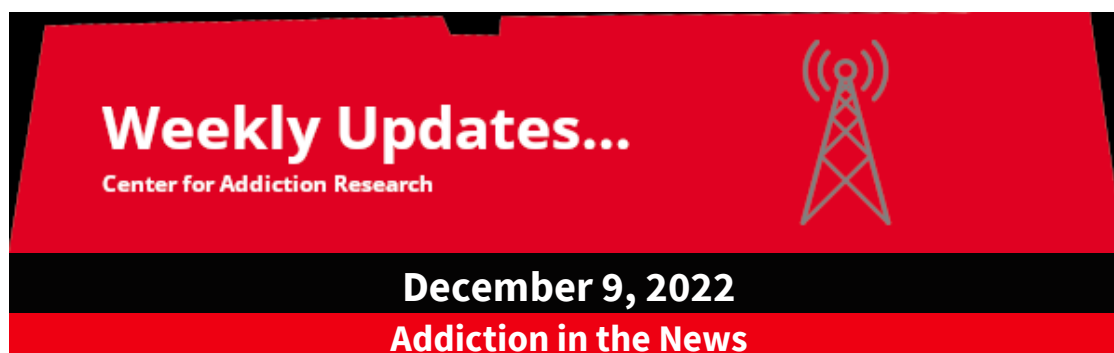


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 12.9.2022

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**

#### **Nearly 1,000 overdoses reversed using naloxone distributed through vending machine**

New research from the University of Cincinnati, in partnership with local nonprofit Caracole, shows a self-service vending machine filled with harm reduction supplies such as naloxone helped prevent overdoses and contributed to Hamilton County's overdose deaths decreasing in 2021. The research, led by UC's Daniel Arendt, Doctor of Pharmacy, was published Nov. 11 in the Journal of the American Pharmacists Association. Arendt said harm reduction is a paradigm within drug and addiction education that recognizes that historically, people always have and will continue to use drugs. Harm reduction does not support or enable drug use, but instead aims to empathetically meet people where...

#### **Forbes: More immigrants, fewer drug-related deaths**

A new study, led by the University of Cincinnati, finds that immigration is not related to increased drug overdose deaths in the United States. "A lot of folks believe that immigration patterns may have contributed to drug overdose deaths, but there just doesn't seem to be much relationship," says the study's lead author, Ben Feldmeyer, an associate professor of criminal justice in UC's College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services. The study, published in the journal Criminology, examined county-level data from 2000 to 2015 in the U.S. to analyze the relationships between immigration and deaths from drug overdoses and homicides. What they found, Feldmeyer says, was that...

### **Ohio House votes to decriminalize fentanyl test strips**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio House passed legislation Wednesday that would legalize the possession of test strips used to identify the presence of fentanyl in illicit drugs. The policy is aimed at expanding access to the strips, a harm-reduction approach designed to reduce the near-record level of Ohioans who fatally overdose on opioids year over year. For the last several years, experts have warned that fentanyl – a powerful synthetic opioid – has entered the drug supply and is driving increasing rates of fatal overdoses. It’s often present in drugs without the user’s knowledge. The test strips are a cheap (they cost roughly \$1) means of ensuring people know what they’re taking. Current Ohio...

### **Coming to Kentucky: At-home addiction treatment**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Aware Recovery Care offers in-home addiction treatment services in nine states. Next week, Kentucky will become the tenth. The commonwealth saw overdose deaths increase 15 percent in just a year's time and the group is hoping to reverse the trend. The company's CEO, Dr. Brian Holzer, said their results are better than the national recovery average because clients are kept in their homes. The treatment lasts one year and includes wraparound services from a group including recovery specialists, nurses, and psychiatrists. He says it's a stark contrast with other treatment options. "So they go away, they're treated well, they're fed well and then you're reinserting them..."

### **Reynoldsburg eyes licensing program for businesses selling tobacco products**

Businesses in Reynoldsburg that sell tobacco products would be required to purchase a license and undergo compliance checks to ensure they aren’t selling to those younger than 21, according to a proposed law. The ordinance, which received its first reading during City Council’s Nov. 26 meeting, would require businesses to buy a \$500 license annually to “ensure proper enforcement,” City Attorney Chris Shook said. Franklin County Public Health would conduct inspection and compliance checks, even in portions of Reynoldsburg located in Licking and Fairfield counties. The proposal says businesses could pay fines or have their license suspended or revoked if they are caught selling...

## **National News**

### **Naltrexone and Alcohol Use**

Prescribing naltrexone for alcohol misuse continues to be one of the most underutilized interventions in medicine. Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is among the most devastating health conditions in the United States. Although deaths from opioids and other substances garner more attention, at least 80,000 deaths annually are attributable to alcohol use (1, 2). The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated problematic alcohol use, especially among women and non-Hispanic Black individuals (3). The range of medical and psychiatric consequences of alcohol use is well documented. We now know more about...

### **Drug, Alcohol Deaths among Seniors Soar**

Nov. 30, 2022 -- Drug overdose deaths among people over 65 more than tripled in the last 20 years, and the deaths from alcohol abuse rose 18% from 2019 to 2020, according to government data released Wednesday. Drug overdoses claimed more than 5,000 lives in 2020 and alcohol more than 11,600, the National Center for Health Statistics said. "We've got a public health problem coming at our door — these trends have been increasing for a long time now," Alexis Kuerbis, a professor and an expert on substance use among older adults, told CNBC. Part of the increase in drug use is due...

### **Adverse childhood experiences linked to excessive alcohol consumption in college students**

New research published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found a connection between alcohol consumption in college and adverse experiences in childhood. The study revealed that as scores on a measure of adverse childhood experiences increased, so did the likelihood that the individual would have an unhealthy relationship with alcohol. The last two decades have seen much research into the consequences of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Karolina Šulejová and colleagues defined ACEs as "physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, neglect, being the witness of domestic violence, and other..."

### **Many genes linked to alcohol and tobacco use are shared among diverse ancestries**

Penn State College of Medicine researchers have co-led a large genetic study that identified more than 2,300 genes predicting alcohol and tobacco use after analyzing data from more than 3.4 million people. They found that a majority of these genes were similar among people with European, African, American and Asian ancestries. The team's results were published in *Nature* on Dec 7. Alcohol and tobacco use are associated with approximately 15% and 5% of deaths worldwide, respectively, and are linked with chronic conditions like cancer and heart disease. Although the environment and culture can...

### **Children are ditching alcohol for marijuana, as 20-year national US study shows a 245% increase**

Adolescent cannabis abuse has increased 245% since 2000 in the US, while alcohol abuse has steadily declined over the same period. That's according to a national, peer-reviewed study tracking intentional misuse and abuse reported to the National Poison Data System (NPDS) up until 2020. Findings, published today in the peer-reviewed journal *Clinical Toxicology*, find over 338,000 instances of intentional abuse or misuse amongst American children aged 6-18. The majority of ingestions occurred in males (58.3%), and more than 80% of all reported exposure cases occurred in young people aged...

## **Nicotine Addiction, a Result of Vaping**

One of my 18-year-old patients beseeched me to write a post about vaping. He told me that he has tried to quit vaping nicotine on a few occasions and was dismayed to find that his addiction to nicotine was harder to break than his use of weed. He explained that his nicotine withdrawal symptoms made him very irritable and that he felt that he had to inhale some more nicotine to prevent himself from lashing out. He thought he was so hooked on nicotine because it was so easy to inhale high doses through his vape pen. Vaping involves using a device that heats a liquid, producing an aerosol that...

## **The chase is on: Regulators are slowly cracking down on vapes aimed at teens**

Samuel Rose says he was raised by a devoted single mom who warned all her seven children to avoid drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. But when his high school friend urged him to try making vapor rings with a Juul e-cigarette five years ago, Rose figured there was no danger — vaping was billed as a healthier alternative to smoking. "I never picked up a cigarette, but I picked up a vape just fine because I was like, 'OK, I can still get the buzz of nicotine but not get cancer from it — it's not dangerous,'" Rose says. Plus, he says, every living soul his age in Gaffney, S.C., seemed to think the same thing back...

## **JUUL LABS REACHES GLOBAL RESOLUTION IN U.S. LITIGATION**

As of today, Juul Labs has reached settlements with plaintiffs in the federal multidistrict litigation (MDL) and related "JUUL Labs Product Cases" (JCCP) that have been consolidated in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. These settlements represent a major step toward strengthening Juul Labs' operations and securing the company's path forward to fulfill its mission to transition adult smokers away from combustible cigarettes while combating underage use. The global resolution covers more than 5,000 cases brought by approximately 10,000...

## **Biden administration unveils dashboard to track nonfatal drug overdoses**

The Biden administration is rolling out a new tool meant to help prevent drug deaths: a nationwide database that tracks nonfatal overdoses. The dashboard, known as the Non-Fatal Opioid Overdose Surveillance Tracker, will offer fresh insights about overdose rates, the drug supply, and the effectiveness of local emergency response efforts, the White House said. If effective, the tool could help fill a major information gap. In most of the country, it isn't known exactly how many people experience drug overdoses but survive — making it difficult to steer resources to specific cities or neighborhoods...

## **Addiction treatment proponents urge rural clinicians to pitch in by prescribing medication**

Andrea Storjohann is glad to see that she's becoming less of a rarity in rural America. The nurse practitioner prescribes medication to dozens of patients trying

to recover from addiction to heroin or opioid painkillers. The general-practice clinic where she works, housed in a repurposed supermarket building, has no signs designating it as a place for people to seek treatment for drug addiction, which is how Storjohann wants it. "You could be coming here for OB-GYN care. You could be coming here for a sore throat. You could be coming here for any number of reasons," and no one in the waiting...

### **Fewer Neonatal Risks With Buprenorphine for Opioid Use Disorder in Pregnancy**

Buprenorphine treatment for pregnant patients with opioid use disorder (OUD) was linked with fewer neonatal risks compared with methadone therapy, but had similar maternal outcomes, an analysis of Medicaid data found. Neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) occurred in 52% of infants whose mothers took buprenorphine in the 30 days before delivery compared with 69% of those whose mothers took methadone (adjusted relative risk 0.73, 95% CI 0.71-0.75), reported Elizabeth Suarez, PhD, MPH, of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, both in Boston, and...

### **Opioid Addiction: Overdose Risk Increases After Pain Relievers Are Discontinued**

A new study says opioid overdose risk increases when opioid pain relievers are discontinued for both people with and without opioid use disorder. In their report, the study authors said discontinuing prescribed opioids was associated with increased overdose risk. The findings, which were published today in the journal PLOS Medicine, indicated that opioid-related overdose is now a leading cause of accidental death in the United States and Canada, something that caused both countries to implement guidelines restricting opioid prescribing for chronic pain. The researchers did a cohort study...

### **To Combat Opioid Epidemic, Step Up Safe Prescribing Practices, Expert Urges**

SAN DIEGO -- While urology and other medical specialties have taken steps to rein in opioid overprescribing, the skyrocketing death rate in the U.S. due to opioid overdose indicates urologists -- and other healthcare providers -- are not being aggressive enough in implementing safe prescribing practices, according to Benjamin Davies, MD, of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. "It is almost shocking to say that in 2022, 100,000 people have died over the past year from opioid use," said Davies during a session at the Society of Urologic Oncology annual meeting. "We are on a slope..."

### **Drug Overdose Deaths in Pregnancy Rose 81% in Recent Years**

Drug overdose deaths in pregnancy or the postpartum period increased sharply in the U.S. in recent years, with the rise most pronounced at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, researchers reported. From 2017 to 2020, overdose deaths in this population rose from 6.56 to 11.85 per 100,000 individuals, representing an 81%

increase, according to Emilie Bruzelius, MPH, and Silvia S. Martins, MD, PhD, both of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health in New York City, who reported their findings in JAMA. By comparison, overdose deaths among non-pregnant females of reproductive...

### **UAMS researchers design app to prevent opioid use disorder relapse**

A trio of researchers at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) have designed a smart phone application to decrease opioid cravings and optimize medication-assisted treatment among individuals with opioid use disorder. A prototype of the app, known as OptiMAT (Optimizing Medication Assisted Treatment), was one of five winning entries in the 2022 National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) "Product Prototypes to Combat Drug Craving" Challenge, a national contest of product prototypes designed to reduce drug cravings and prevent drug misuse, earning Andrew James, Ph.D....

### **Can Fentanyl Be Made Safer?**

Illicit fentanyl has been public health enemy #1 in the United States since 2016, when the DEA first declared there was a "fentanyl crisis" and warned that overdose deaths would increase due to the growing trade in street drugs laced with the potent synthetic opioid. That prediction sadly came true, as illicit fentanyl is now involved in about 71,000 U.S. overdose deaths a year. A team of scientists says it can reverse that trend by using sodium to make fentanyl far less dangerous, yet still effective in treating pain. "In its current form, fentanyl is like a weapon of mass destruction," says Vsevolod...

### **Congress has its sights set too low on addiction, advocates charge**

Judging by lawmakers' words, addiction might be the most bipartisan topic in Washington. For years, Democrats and Republicans alike have made speeches, authored bills, and issued statements decrying the national drug overdose crisis. The opioid epidemic even ranks as one of the four elements of President Biden's "Unity Agenda" — priorities supposedly so uncontroversial that Capitol Hill could tackle them quickly and without fuss. Judging lawmakers by their actions, however, leaves a distinctly different impression. With just weeks remaining in the current session, Congress appears...

### **People with disabilities who misuse opioid drugs 73% more likely to attempt suicide, national study finds**

People who take medical opioid drugs without a doctor's prescription are 37% more likely than non-users to plan suicide—and the risk is even greater for those with disabilities, who have 73% higher odds of attempting to take their own life. The findings are from a study of over 38,000 adults who took part in the US National Survey on Drug Use and Health in 2019, published in the journal Substance Use and Misuse. "Suicide can be understood as a severe expression of psychological distress,

and people with disabilities are likely under-identified and under-treated for mental health issues which...

### **Buprenorphine use remained stable during first year of pandemic**

The number of active prescriptions for the opioid disorder treatment drug buprenorphine remained constant during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the number of new prescriptions for the treatment was far below what would normally have been expected, according to a new RAND Corporation study. Examining prescription drug records from across the U.S, the study found that the number of new treatment episodes started between March 2020 and December 2020 were more than 17% fewer than what would have been expected based on patterns from the previous year. This...

### **Machine learning predicts risk of opioid use disorder for individual patients**

Clinicians and policy makers might get assistance from artificial intelligence in predicting opioid use disorder, thanks to a team of Alberta researchers. The researchers have created and tested a machine learning model that reliably predicts the risk of developing the disorder in individual patients by analyzing administrative health data at the population level. Administrative health data are created every time a patient interacts with the health-care system—for example, by visiting a doctor, getting a diagnostic test, being admitted to hospital or filling a prescription. Opioid use disorder...

### **Heart Failure From Meth Use: Growing Beast Lurks in the Shadows**

In recent years, methamphetamine-associated heart failure (MethHF) ensnared more people across sociodemographic groups without showing signs of relenting, according to the limited data available. Although reliable estimates are lacking, the prevalence of MethHF is likely increasing in step with rising methamphetamine use worldwide, reported a group led by Veena Manja, MBBS, PhD, a cardiologist and healthcare researcher at the VA Center for Innovation to Implementation in Menlo Park, California. Such growth in MethHF "calls for increased awareness and availability of treatment for...

## Funding Opportunities



### GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[NOT-DA-24-003](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Administrative Supplement for Rapid Translation of Substance Use and Addiction Epidemiology and Prevention Intervention Research](#)

[NOT-AA-23-004](#)

[Notice of NIAAA's Participation in NOT-DA-22-064 "Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for NIH Brain Development Cohorts Biospecimen Access \(X01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)"](#)

#### **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.

#### **Greenwall Awards Support Making a Difference in Real-World Bioethics Dilemmas**

**Deadline: January 3, 2023 (Letters of Intent)**

The Greenwall Foundation has opened its request for proposals for its bioethics grants program, Making a Difference in Real-World Bioethics Dilemmas. The program supports research to help resolve an important emerging or unanswered bioethics problem in clinical, biomedical, or public health decision making, policy, or practice. Past award amounts have ranged to about \$240,000 over two years. All innovative proposals that will have a real-world impact will be considered. Greenwall Foundation is particularly interested in proposals that address the ethical and policy issues raised by the following priority topics: bias and discrimination against patients or clinicians, which may be based on a broad range of characteristics, and which may involve institutional and systemic contributors to bias and racism as well as health disparities or social determinants of health; trust in science, medicine, and public health; public health crises (such as the COVID-19 pandemic, opioid epidemic, and others), including their impact on mental health; and healthcare access, costs, and resource allocation. Projects may be empirical, conceptual, or normative. Successful teams identified by the foundation commonly involve a bioethics scholar and persons with on-the-ground experience with the bioethics dilemma, for example, in clinical care; biomedical research; biotechnology, pharmaceutical, big data, and artificial intelligence companies; or



public service. Such collaboration can specify the bioethics problems that clinicians, researchers, policy makers, public health officials, and others face daily and facilitate practical resolutions to these problems. Applicants are encouraged to engage with relevant lay or community stakeholders throughout their project.

### **PCORI Opens Window to Address Social, Clinical Determinants of Maternal Health**

**Deadline: February 8, 2023 (Letters of Intent), Full applications due May 3, 2023**

The Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), a nonprofit research organization, will begin open its application process in January 2023, for the Partnering Research and Community Organizations for Novel Health Equity Research: Addressing Social and Clinical determinants of Maternal Health. Three awards are expected to be made. A Planning Phase of up to one year and up to \$1 million per awardee. And a Research Phase of up to five years and up to \$20 million per awardee. This opportunity focuses on improving maternal outcomes by simultaneously addressing health conditions and social determinants of health. PCORI seeks to fund rigorous high-quality studies that address the research question: What is the comparative effectiveness of multicomponent, multilevel interventions to improve maternal outcomes for individuals from populations highly impacted by maternal health disparities? Proposed CER studies may focus on pre-and/or postnatal care. A webinar answering questions about the Partner Targeted PCORI Funding Announcement, and how to submit a responsive application, is now available at [https://www.pcori.org/events/2022/cycle-1-2023-partner-targeted-pfa-applicant-town-hall?utm\\_source=weeklyemail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=112222](https://www.pcori.org/events/2022/cycle-1-2023-partner-targeted-pfa-applicant-town-hall?utm_source=weeklyemail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=112222)

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