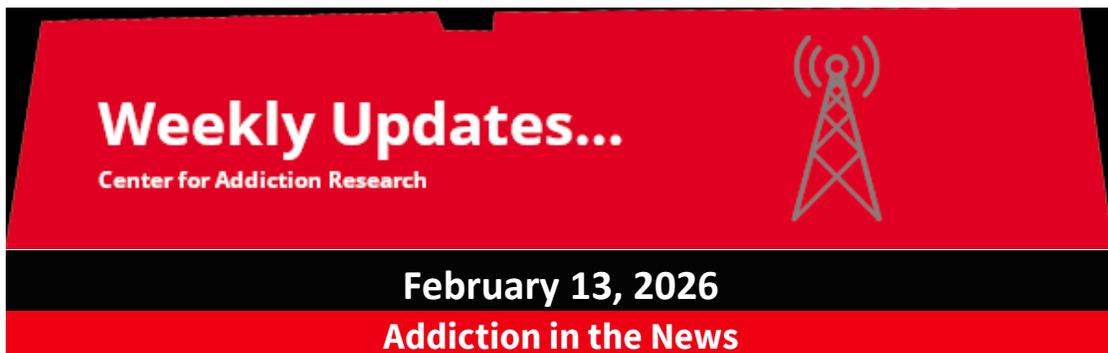


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu))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

#### **Powerful AI can help diagnose substance use disorder**

Diagnosing substance-use disorder can be difficult because of patient denial related to the stigma attached to addiction. But a new study by the University of Cincinnati uses a novel artificial intelligence to predict substance use defining behaviors with up to 83% accuracy and 84% accuracy to predict the severity of the addiction. Researchers say this could allow clinicians to provide treatment faster to patients who need it. The clinical standard for psychiatry defines substance use disorder by four categories of destructive behaviors related to impaired control, physical dependence, social impairments and risky use irrespective...

#### **Four mothers overcome addiction, jail to rebuild their lives through Hamilton County recovery court**

CINCINNATI — Applause echoed through Room 615 at Hamilton County Juvenile Court as four women received gift bags and words of congratulations. But this wasn't a typical graduation ceremony. These mothers had earned something far more precious than a diploma — they had earned their children back. Seventeen months ago, Tabitha Dick was pregnant and sitting in a jail cell, having lost custody of her two youngest children and her home. On Tuesday, she stood before a crowd of supporters, holding a certificate that represented a challenging journey. "I felt hopeless, discouraged. ... I just felt unworthy. I felt like a bad...

### **Ohio AG sues 9 multistate cannabis operators which allegedly schemed to keep prices high**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (WKRC) - Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost has sued multiple multi-state cannabis operators which allegedly schemed to keep prices high and harm small, Ohio-based cannabis businesses. Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost has filed an antitrust lawsuit accusing nine multistate cannabis operators of working together to limit competition in Ohio's cannabis market, reducing product choice and keeping prices artificially high while harming smaller, Ohio-based cannabis businesses. The lawsuit stems from an October 2024 tip submitted to Yost's office by an Ohio cannabis industry employee. The tip alleged...

### **Tri-State police make big drug arrest after noticing car parked across 2 handicap spots**

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP, Ohio (WKRC) - Officers in Warren County made a drug bust after coming across a car parked across multiple handicap parking spots. According to the Hamilton Township Police Department, an officer noticed the vehicle and then had K9 officer Kahn inspect the car. Kahn was then able to find approximately 40 grams of methamphetamine, loaded syringes, meth pipes, and other paraphernalia. "If you're going to transport felony-level amounts of drugs, maybe don't park across two handicap spaces without a placard," said the police department on social media. The person arrested...

### **Northern Kentucky's first medical marijuana dispensary opens its doors**

FLORENCE, Ky. (WKRC) - Bluegrass Cannacare, Northern Kentucky's first medical marijuana dispensary, has officially opened in Florence, marking a significant milestone nearly three years after Kentucky lawmakers legalized medical cannabis. The dispensary, located in a former bank building at the corner of Burlington Pike and Turfway Road, is one of only five currently operating across the state. General Manager Chad Johns expressed excitement about receiving one of the limited licenses. "When they gave out our name, it was like we had won the Super Bowl. We had the World Cup. It was amazing. Everyone exploded in...

### **Kentucky looks to expand medical marijuana access with new conditions**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (WKRC) - Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear announced on Thursday that medical marijuana gummies are now available at licensed dispensaries in the state and called on lawmakers to expand the list of qualifying conditions for medical cannabis. Beshear said his administration sent a letter to legislative leaders recommending the addition of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Crohn's disease, sickle cell anemia, fibromyalgia, glaucoma and terminal illnesses. He said expanding eligibility could allow about 430,000 additional Kentuckians to access medical marijuana. The governor highlighted recent...

## **National News**

### **One in eight higher-risk drinkers reported guilt or remorse, study finds**

Dr. Sharon Cox (UCL Institute of Epidemiology & Health Care) reports on a new analysis finding that 1 in 8 people who drink at increasing or higher-risk levels felt guilt or remorse after drinking in the past six months. Dr. Cox's study was published in *Drug and Alcohol Review*. Many people recognize the feeling. A night of drinking followed by regret. A sense you drank more than you meant to or that alcohol and a hangover has got in the way of work, relationships, or health goals. As we enter a new year, many of us may be thinking we consumed too much alcohol over the festive season, and new goals of lowering...

### **Workplace drinking in focus: How one free case of nonalcoholic drinks can cut short-term alcohol intake**

Providing nonalcoholic beverages has been identified as a potential strategy for reducing alcohol consumption. A study by University of Tsukuba published in *Heliyon* has confirmed that even a single provision of one case of nonalcoholic beverages can result in a short-term reduction in alcohol intake. This low-cost, easily implemented approach may support reduced alcohol intake in workplace settings. Excessive alcohol consumption is a global public health challenge included in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Workplace interventions are particularly important because working-age adults...

### **People from low-income communities smoke more, are more addicted and are less likely to quit, study finds**

A new paper in *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*, finds that people experiencing more economic disadvantages are more likely to smoke cigarettes, have higher levels of tobacco addiction, and find it harder to quit than those who are most advantaged. This pattern was consistent across different forms and severity of disadvantage. Despite decades of work by policymakers and reductions in smoking rates, tobacco use is still a leading cause of preventable mortality worldwide. In England, official estimates suggest 11.9% of adults smoke cigarettes. Some 11.6% of American adults smoke. Greater smoking prevalence...

### **Study finds daily opioid use fell 9 to 11 points after recreational cannabis legalization**

Legalizing cannabis for both medical and recreational use may lead to a decline in daily opioid use among people who inject drugs in the United States, according to a new study led by a Boston University School of Public Health researcher (BUSPH). Published in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, the study found that US states that legalized marijuana for medical and adult recreational use saw a 9-to-11-percentage-point decline in daily opioid use among this population, compared to states that legalized marijuana for medical use only. While the harms and benefits of cannabis use and cannabis reform continue to be...

### **A glaucoma drug may help prevent opioid relapse**

An existing drug currently used to treat glaucoma, altitude sickness, and seizures may also have the potential to prevent relapse in opioid use disorder, according to a study by researchers at University of Iowa Health Care. The work is published in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*. The UI researchers led by John Wemmie, MD, Ph.D., focused on the drug known as acetazolamide (AZD) because it blocks the activity of a brain enzyme called carbonic anhydrase 4 (CA4). Wemmie's team had previously discovered that inhibiting CA4 in the whole brain, or just in its reward center (the nucleus accumbens), of mice...

### **Drug injection fades as smoking grows more common, marking sea change in U.S. fentanyl epidemic**

ROCHESTER, N.H. — Megan Merrill paused, mid-hike, as she surveyed the steep drop before her. She was standing on a five-foot snow drift, icy and brittle after 10 days of unrelenting New England cold, below which lay the railroad tracks that serve as a de facto border between the town behind her and the homeless encampment in front. She took the downward slope at a gallop, using her oversized backpack as a counterweight. The bag was made heavy with a stockpile of harm reduction supplies meant to help vulnerable drug users stay healthy and avoid disease, including sterile syringes, condoms, emergency blankets...

### **Wastewater reveals increase in new synthetic opioids during major New Orleans events**

In early 2025, the party-loving city of New Orleans, Louisiana, hosted two major events within the span of a month: Super Bowl LIX and Mardi Gras. And, as with many major events, it appears there was an increase in recreational drug use during this time. Researchers publishing in *Environmental Science & Technology Letters* show how monitoring wastewater revealed an increase in the use of relatively new dangerous synthetic opioids during these two events. "Our study reveals the growing trend of synthetic opioid use in communities and our non-invasive approach to detect these emerging drugs, helping public health..."

### **Study finds addiction consults led to opioid treatment for eye infection patients**

People who use injection drugs are at a higher risk for eye infections, particularly endogenous endophthalmitis—a medical emergency caused by bacteria or fungi entering the bloodstream to reach the inside of the eye. These individuals may present to eye clinics or emergency rooms with severe, vision-threatening disease. However, the underlying substance use disorder that led to their infection is often not addressed in a systematic way. These encounters represent a critical—and often missed—opportunity to connect patients with evidence-based, life-saving addiction treatments. Researchers at the Mass General...

### **Pregnancy-related complications are not the most common causes of maternal death among pregnant women, new mothers**

Researchers at Columbia University have found that accidental drug overdose, homicide, and suicide are the leading causes of death among pregnant and postpartum women. The researchers used information on death certificates to identify all pregnant and postpartum women (within 42 days of delivery) who died in the United States between 2018 and 2023. The findings are published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. "Overdose and violence are not typically on our radar when it comes to thinking about approaches to reducing maternal morbidity and mortality, but these events are far more common among..."

### **Gambling impacts people's quality of life as severely as chronic medical conditions, alcohol and illegal drugs**

The impacts of severe gambling pose similar threats to a person's physical and mental well-being as a chronic health condition or alcohol and illegal drug use, a new study suggests. The research found that experiencing gambling harm can result in a 16% reduction in a person's ability to carry out everyday tasks (referred to in the study as their capability well-being), and a 14% reduction in their quality of life (referred to as their health utility). The percentages are comparable to those experiencing the highest levels of harm driven by cocaine and alcohol use, as well as those with health conditions including depression and opiate...

### **Help for adults addicted to social media and internet gaming**

James Cook University researchers have taken a deeper dive into the complexities of human personality traits and addiction in adults, revealing new insights to help with social media addiction and internet gaming disorder. Led by JCU in Singapore's Associate Professor of Psychology Peter Chew, the research was published in the *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*. The study is the first to use a broader set of personality characteristics to examine social media addiction (SMA) and internet gaming disorder (IGD) among adults in the general population, rather than adolescents. "The main purpose of our research is to inform..."

### **Google, Meta, Push Back on Addiction Claims in Landmark Social Media Trial**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jurors in a landmark social media case that seeks to hold tech companies responsible for harms to children got their first glimpse into what will be a lengthy trial characterized by dueling narratives from the plaintiffs and the two remaining defendants, Meta and YouTube. At the core of the Los Angeles case is a 20-year-old identified only by the initials "KGM," whose case could determine how thousands of similar lawsuits will play out. KGM and the cases of two other plaintiffs have been selected to be bellwether trials — essentially test cases for both sides to see how their arguments play out before a...

## Funding Opportunities



## GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

There are no new NIH Grants Funding Opportunities to post this week.

## CAR Member New Publications

### **Association between pregnancy intention and postpartum contraceptive interest among pregnant people with opioid use disorder**

David M. Schiff, Alexindra Wheeler, Daniel Lewis, Mishka Terplan, Shelly F. Greenfield, Jessica R. Gray, Elizabeth E. Krans, Marcela C. Smid, Frankie Kropp, John T. Winhusen

*Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.josat.2026.209899>

#### **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** Identify sociodemographic and substance use characteristics associated with pregnancy intention and explore the relationship between pregnancy intent and postpartum contraception interest among pregnant individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD).

**Methods:** Secondary analysis of baseline data collected in the Medication Treatment for OUD in Expectant Mothers trial, which evaluated injectable versus sublingual buprenorphine. Current pregnancy intention was classified as “intended,” “mistimed,” “unwanted,” or “ambivalent.” Postpartum contraceptive interest was categorized into highly effective, effective, less effective, or none. Participant characteristics and contraceptive interest was compared across intention categories using Fisher's Exact and Kruskal-Wallis tests.

**Results:** Of 155 participants who completed baseline screening, 137 (88%) did not report any contraceptive use prior to their current pregnancy. Twenty-eight percent reported intended pregnancies, 27% mistimed, 15% never wanted, and 30% were ambivalent towards their current pregnancy. Individuals reporting intended pregnancies disclosed less substance use in the past ninety days and twelve months compared to other categories. Forty-seven percent of participants desired highly effective contraception after delivery, 28% desired effective contraception, 4% desired less effective contraception, and 21% did not desire any contraception. Participants reporting an unwanted pregnancy were significantly more interested in sterilization, while participants reporting a mistimed pregnancy were significantly more interested in a postpartum long-acting reversible contraception.

**Conclusions:** Our findings that individuals with intended pregnancies report less recent substance use suggests that reproductive health decision-making may be difficult to prioritize during periods of active addiction. In addition, the lack of association between pregnancy intention and postpartum contraceptive interest underscores a need for novel ways to support perinatal individuals with OUD in family planning conversations that honor their reproductive autonomy, values, and desires.

© [2020 Center for Addiction Research]

