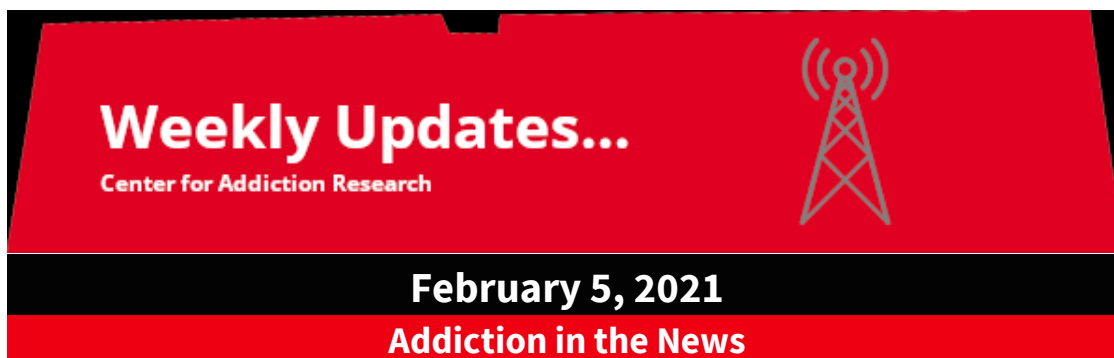


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members.

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

The dangers of drugged driving are outpacing drunk driving (lead author, CAR Affiliate Member, Andrew Yockey)

UC News

A recent [study](#) of drugged driving, by a team of University of Cincinnati researchers, shows that a sizable percentage of individuals reported the use of marijuana and other illicit drugs while behind the wheel. "We need to focus our efforts on drugged driving, in addition to drunk driving, because drugged driving causes such a high level of fatalities..."

Addiction In The Pandemic: Overdose Deaths Surge As Coronavirus Adds To Opioid Crisis

WOUB Public Media

FRANKFORT, Ky. (OVR) — Terrance D. has been sober for more than 15 years and Narcotics Anonymous has been a big part of his recovery. He uses a pseudonym when speaking publicly about addiction and his work with NA. Terrance said the bonds the group has formed are very important, and they were forged through regular social gatherings. "We recover in meetings together, we've raised our families together, our kids know one another," he said. "We..."

National News

Smoke-Related Toxins Found In Marijuana Smokers' Blood, Urine.

[Modern Healthcare](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 215K) reported that scientists “at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a study in *EClinicalMedicine* showing people who smoked marijuana had smoke-related toxins in the blood and urine, albeit at lower levels than those who smoked both tobacco and marijuana or tobacco only.” The researchers said, “Marijuana smoking is prevalent among HIV+ individuals, but few studies have characterized smoke-related toxicants or associated health outcomes in exclusive marijuana users.”

Opioid Activist Groups Say They Do Not Want Janet Woodcock To Continue As FDA Commissioner After Transition.

[Endpoints News](#) (1/28, Tong) reports, “A coalition of advocacy groups dedicated to the opioid crisis urged Norris Cochran and Xavier Becerra – the acting and designated HHS secretary, respectively – to keep” acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock’s reign a “very short transition.” Among the decisions for which the opioid activists hold Woodcock responsible are “letting opioid manufacturers disseminate false claims about the risks and benefits, neglecting to implement policy recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, and approving the hotly debated, extremely potent fentanyl analogue, *Dsuvia* [sufentanil sublingual tablet].” The article adds, “The advocates join a vocal minority of biopharma insiders who are fiercely opposed to her potential appointment as the head of FDA.”

Oregon Law To Decriminalize Possession Of All Drugs Goes Into Effect.

[USA Today](#) (2/1, Schnell, 12.7M) reports that Oregon’s Measure 110, a “first-of-its-kind legislation that decriminalizes the possession of all illegal drugs in Oregon, including heroin, cocaine, meth and oxycodone,” goes into effect today and “will be implemented over the next decade by the state officials at the Oregon Health Authority.” The law moves away from the traditional “criminal justice-based approach” opting instead for a “health care-based approach, offering addicts treatment instead of prison time.” People “in possession will be fined \$100, a citation that will be dropped if they agree to treatment.”

Biden Names Regina LaBelle As Deputy Director Of ONDCP.

[NPR](#) (2/3, Mann, 3.69M) reports, “President Biden named more of the team that will tackle the addiction crisis on Wednesday” while “overdose deaths surge to record levels, topping 81,000 fatalities over the past 12 months, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.” Regina LaBelle will serve as deputy director of

the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and will head the office until a director is “named and confirmed by the Senate.”

New NIH Database To Track Neurologic Effects Of COVID-19.

[Medscape](#) (1/29, Brooks, Subscription Publication, 219K) reported, “The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has launched a database to track COVID-19–related neurologic symptoms, complications, and outcomes as well as the effects of the virus on preexisting neurologic conditions.” According to National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke program director Barbara Karp, MD, “There is an urgent need to understand COVID-19–related neurological problems, which not uncommonly include headaches, fatigue, cognitive difficulties, stroke, pain, and sleep disorders as well as some very rare complications of serious infections.”

Additional Source. [Healio](#) (1/29, 40K) reported, “The COVID-19 Neuro Databank/Biobank was developed, and will be maintained, by NYU Langone Health in New York City as a resource for clinical information and biospecimens from people who have experienced COVID-19-related neurological issues,” according to a news release. This “database is supported by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) at the NIH.”

Telehealth Used In 30.1% Of Visits During COVID-19 Pandemic.

[Healio](#) (2/1, Michael, 40K) reports, “Telehealth visits accounted for approximately 30% of total outpatient visits early in the COVID-19 pandemic, with uptake varying among specialties and by patient characteristics,” researchers concluded after assessing “data from 16.7 million individuals with commercial or Medicare Advantage insurance to evaluate trends in telehealth and in-person visits from January 1, 2020, to June 16, 2020,” then evaluating “whether these visits varied based on patient characteristics, specialty or patients’ medical conditions.” The study revealed that “telehealth was used at least once by 67.7% of endocrinologists, 57% of gastroenterologists and 56.3% of neurologists,” but “was considerably lower among some specialties, with just 3.3% of optometrists, 6.6% of physical therapists, 9.3% of ophthalmologists and 20.7% of orthopedic surgeons using telehealth at least once during the pandemic.” Lead author Sadiq Y. Patel, PhD, is “a National Institute of Mental Health postdoctoral research fellow in the department of health care policy at Harvard Medical School.” The findings were published online in the journal *Health Affairs*.

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[NOT-DA-21-057](#)

[Notice of Change to RFA-DA-21-016, "Novel Approaches to Decrease Stigma of Substance Use Disorders in order to Facilitate Prevention, Treatment, and Support During Recovery \(R43/R44 - Clinical Trials Optional\)"](#)

[PAR-21-145](#)

[Research on Biopsychosocial Factors of Social Connectedness and Isolation on Health, Wellbeing, Illness, and Recovery \(R01 Clinical Trials Not Allowed\)](#)

[PAR-21-144](#)

[Research on Biopsychosocial Factors of Social Connectedness and Isolation on Health, Wellbeing, Illness, and Recovery \(R01 Basic Experimental Studies with Humans Required\)](#)

[RFA-DA-22-004](#)

[Exploratory studies to investigate mechanisms of HIV infection, replication, latency, and/or pathogenesis in the context of substance use disorders \(R61/R33 - Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

CAR Member New Publications

“Heroin use is associated with liver fibrosis in the Miami Adult Studies on HIV (MASH) cohort” Marianna K. Baum, Javier A. Tamargo, Richard L. Ehman, Kenneth E.

Sherman, Jun Chen, Qingyun Liu, Raul N. Mandler, Colby Teeman, Sabrina S. Martinez, Adriana Campa

Drug and Alcohol Dependence Journal, DOI:[10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2021.108531](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2021.108531)

ABSTRACT

Background: People who use opioids and people living with HIV (PLWH) are at increased risk for liver-related morbidity and mortality. Although animal models suggest that chronic opioid use may cause liver damage, research in humans is limited. We aimed to determine whether opioid use, particularly heroin, was associated with liver fibrosis.

Methods: Cross-sectional analysis of 679 participants (295 HIV/HCV uninfected, 218 HIV mono-infected, 87 HCV mono-infected, 79 HIV/HCV coinfecting) from the Miami Adult Studies on HIV (MASH) cohort. Liver fibrosis was assessed via magnetic resonance elastography (MRE) on a 3 T Siemens MAGNETOM Prisma scanner.

Results: A total of 120 (17.7 %) participants used opioids. Liver fibrosis was present in 99 (14.6 %) participants and advanced liver fibrosis in 31 (4.6 %). Heroin use (N = 46, 6.8 %) was associated with HCV-seropositivity, smoking, misuse of prescription opioids, and polysubstance use. The use of heroin, but not misuse of prescription opioids, was significantly associated with liver fibrosis (OR = 2.77, 95 % CI: 1.18-6.50) compared to heroin non-users, after adjustment for confounders including excessive alcohol consumption, polysubstance use and HIV and HCV infections. Both HIV and HCV infections were associated with liver fibrosis, whether virally suppressed/undetectable or viremic.

Conclusions: Heroin use was independently associated with increased risk for liver fibrosis irrespective of the use of other substances and HIV or HCV infections. Both HIV and HCV were associated with higher risk for liver fibrosis, even among those with suppressed or undetectable viral loads. The exact mechanisms for opioid-induced liver fibrosis remain to be fully elucidated.

Keywords: HIV; Hepatitis C; Liver diseases; Opioids; Substance abuse.

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