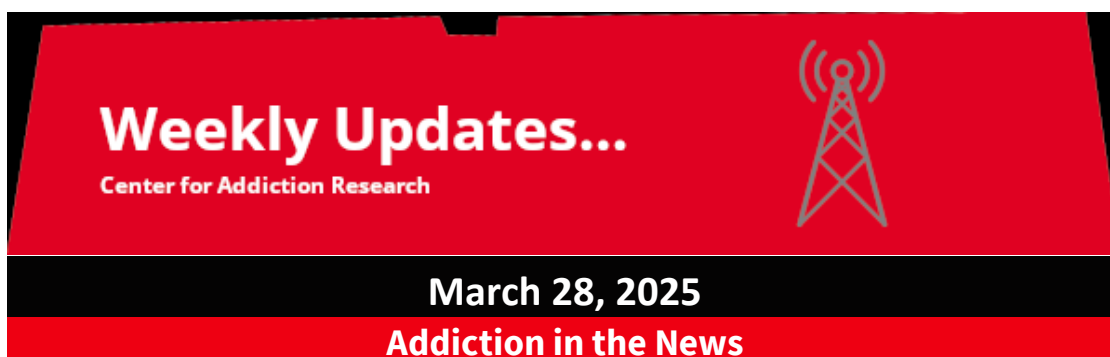


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu))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

#### **Gov. DeWine proposes how recreational marijuana sales tax revenue shouldn't be up to local discretion**

CLEVELAND — Legalizing recreational weed has been the talk of the state since it passed in 2023, as cities were looking forward to receiving extra dollars generated from sales tax, but now, that all may change. Recreational marijuana hit the shelves of authorized dispensaries last August. Since then, adult-use cannabis sales have skyrocketed – collecting more than \$390 million as of March 15. Amid state and local taxes imposed on marijuana, there is an additional 10% tax levied on purchases solely because it's recreational. According to the Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM), recreational marijuana tax revenue has hit more than \$30 million. That total is just from September through the end of February. Thirty-six...

Stay up to date on research projects being conducted by CAR members: [Projects \(uc.edu\)](#)

Stay up to date on CAR member publications: [Publications \(uc.edu\)](#)

### **National News**

#### **Potential risk biomarkers found for schizophrenia resulting from cannabis use**

A study by the Neuropsychopharmacology and IBeA groups of the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) paves the way to obtaining biomarkers to predict the

development of schizophrenia. The UPV/EHU study, recently published in the journal Scientific Reports, has analyzed and compared the fatty acids in the blood of individuals with schizophrenia, of those with cannabis use disorder and of those with both diagnoses, with the aim of shedding light on new biomarkers and improving the understanding of the biological relationship between the two disorders. The study also offers a powerful tool for identifying new...

### **Northeast Node Science Series Webinar: Cannabis: Therapeutic Use and Consequences**

April 10, 2025, 12-1pm ET

The landscape of cannabis research has sharpened in recent years, with new understandings of what is therapeutically beneficial and what is not. There is a great diversity in cannabis products and nearly as many ways to consume it, with more US states seeking legalization of both medicinal and recreational use. In this presentation, Dr. Alan Budney will review the state of the science related to the clinical efficacy of cannabis use and discuss alternative ways to consider and act on what is known. He will also review the potential consequences of cannabis use for patients with substance use disorders and how we need to consider situational and individual context when evaluating risk and impact of cannabis consumption.

### **The tobacco lobby claims vaping is displacing youth smoking; a close look at the evidence tells another story**

E-cigarette companies, including giants such as British American Tobacco, have actively lobbied governments in New Zealand and Australia to weaken existing vape regulations while preventing the introduction of stricter ones. As part of their argument, they claim that for adolescents in New Zealand, the use of e-cigarettes (vaping) might be "displacing" cigarette smoking. They argue young people are opting for vapes over traditional cigarettes. Their key piece of evidence for this claim is an influential study published in Lancet Public Health in 2020. It concluded: "The overall decline in smoking over the past 6 years in New Zealand..."

### **Severe gum inflammation found after using white snus**

Painful inflammation that takes months or up to a year to heal—this can be seen in the mouth after using white snus. Researchers in oral medicine at the University of Gothenburg will now look more closely at the effects of the popular white snus. The study is the result of patient cases that have started to be seen within university dental care following referrals from dental clinics. The patients have gum damage extremely different to that seen in those who use traditional brown, tobacco-based snus. At the same time, high user figures for white snus are noted among young people. According to previously unpublished data from the latest...

### **Reporter's notebook: 8 theories why fentanyl deaths are plummeting**

Over the past six months, I've been tracking something really cool and mysterious happening on American streets. For the first time in 30 years, drug deaths are

plunging at a rate that addiction experts say is hopeful — but also baffling. In the past, even the most ambitious, well-funded efforts to slow drug deaths only helped a little bit. Reducing fatal overdoses by 8% or 9% was seen as a huge win. But now, deaths nationwide plunged more than 26% from the peak in June 2023, according to the latest preliminary data gathered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That means roughly 30,000 fewer people a year are...

### **Opioid testing data unavailable in half of US injury death investigations, study reveals**

Opioid testing information was unavailable in half of injury death investigations in the U.S. and in 1 in 10 unintentional overdose death investigations conducted in 2021, according to a recent Northwestern Medicine study published in JAMA. The study reveals the potential undermeasurement of opioid-related deaths and underscores the need for more testing to accurately identify the scope of drug-related mortality in the U.S., said Alexander Lundberg, Ph.D., assistant professor of Emergency Medicine and lead author of the study. Medicolegal death investigations, or an inquiry by a coroner or medical examiner's office to...

### **Study identifies Shisa7 gene as key driver in heroin addiction**

Opioid use disorder is associated with more than 350,000 deaths annually worldwide. Guided by the need for an increased understanding of critical neurobiological features of addiction, researchers have now found a unique molecular signature and genes in the orbitofrontal cortex associated with heroin-seeking behavior. A preclinical rodent model implicated a gene called Shisa7 as the key predictor. A new study published in Biological Psychiatry provides valuable insights into the neurobiological mechanisms underlying heroin addiction and may have implications for the development of innovative strategies to combat the...

### **Lawmakers are pushing the HALT Fentanyl Act as the solution to the overdose crisis. Experts warn it will fall short**

WASHINGTON — Five days after discovering their 16-year-old son Daniel Puerto unresponsive in bed, Jaime Puerto and his wife decided to discontinue life support as they stood beside him in the Los Angeles Children's Hospital. Puerto kissed his son's nose one last time. Daniel, who had no history of drug use, is one of countless stories tragically connected to the nation's opioid crisis. Over the past decade, synthetic opioids have claimed over 450,000 American lives, and left millions more struggling with addiction. Five years after his son's death, Puerto recounted the tragedy before the Senate Judiciary Committee in February, explaining that...

### **Medetomidine is replacing xylazine in Philly street fentanyl, creating new hurdles for health care providers**

Philadelphia's street opioid supply—or "dope" market—is constantly changing. As health care workers and researchers who care for people who use drugs in our community, we have witnessed these shifts firsthand. New adulterants are

frequently added to the mix. They bring additional and often uncertain risks for people who use drugs, and new challenges for the health care providers and systems who treat them. The latest adulterant to dominate the supply is medetomidine. What is medetomidine? Medetomidine, pronounced meh-deh-TOH-muh-deen, is a drug used in veterinary medicine for sedation, muscle relaxation...

### **National study finds one in four adults misusing prescription stimulants**

Research conducted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveals that 1 in 4 adults using prescription stimulants engaged in misuse, and nearly 1 in 10 met the criteria for prescription stimulant use disorder (PSUD). Findings show that amphetamine users were more likely to experience PSUD than those prescribed methylphenidate. Increased prescribing rates, particularly among middle-aged women, were observed, yet this demographic exhibited lower misuse rates than younger...

### **Risk of 2,000 new HIV infections a day after US aid freeze, UN says**

GENEVA, March 24 (Reuters) - There could be 2,000 new HIV infections a day across the world and a ten-fold increase in related deaths if funding frozen by the United States is not restored or replaced, the United Nations AIDS agency said on Monday. President Donald Trump put almost all U.S. foreign aid on hold upon taking office on January 20. Days later, the State Department said life-saving HIV work under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) would continue. But the disruption to health funding and the impact on broader services were having a devastating impact on people living with HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS...

## **Funding Opportunities**



## **GRANTS & FUNDING**

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

Due to a pause in communications, there are no new NIH Grants Funding Opportunities to post this week.

