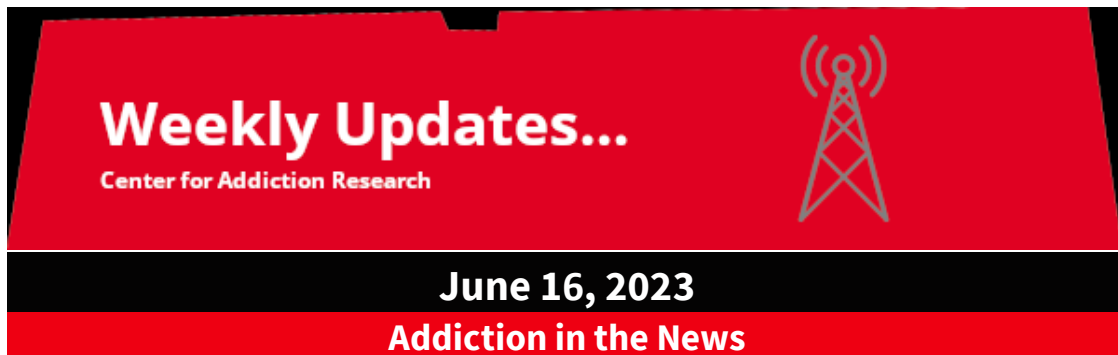


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 6.16.2023

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**

**Hamilton County Public Health Harm Reduction Division is hosting an upcoming webinar:**

***“Recovery Friendly Workplaces in Hamilton County Ohio”***

**When:** Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> from 1:00- 2:00 pm ET

**Register:**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Bow2\\_oFkTXe60WywffN6UA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Bow2_oFkTXe60WywffN6UA)

#### **Summary:**

Recovery Friendly Workplaces (RFWs) support their communities by recognizing recovery from substance use challenges as a strength and by being willing to work intentionally with people in recovery. RFWs encourage a healthy and safe environment where employers, employees, and communities can collaborate to create positive change and eliminate barriers for those impacted by addiction.

Join us to learn how becoming a Recovery Friendly Workplace promotes the physical health and mental well-being of all employees. In this 60-minute session, you'll learn about Hamilton County's RFW initiative and hear from Tyler Meenach, a Health Coordinator at HCPH, about his experience from program initiation until now. We hope you can join us for this Hamilton County Public Health Webinar and participate in this very critical conversation.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Learn how to best replicate Hamilton County's Recovery Friendly Workplace initiative.

2. Identify the strengths, opportunities, and challenges of supporting RFW Initiatives.

### **Ohio will receive \$679.6 million from drug makers, pharmacies as part of opioid settlement**

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Two of the nation's largest drug makers along with two of its biggest pharmacies have agreed to pay \$679.6 million to the state of Ohio as part of a massive settlement over their roles in the ongoing opioid crisis. The deal is related to a bevy of lawsuits brought by attorneys general in 22 states, with overall payouts from Teva, Allergan, CVS, and Walgreens expected to total \$17.3 billion. Ohio AG Dave Yost says his state's portion of the settlement will be received over 15 years, with payments expected to begin by the end of this year. "Too many companies chose not to recognize and take action to prevent the burgeoning opioid crisis that now continues to plague our...

### **VOICES: Support those in recovery with a Sober Summer**

Summer is almost here, bringing with it more daylight hours and weather that beckons us to get out there and have some fun. For those of us in recovery from a substance use disorder (SUD), or showing support for a loved one who is, summer is a perfect time to check out the vast array of activities in Dayton and the surrounding areas that don't involve drinking or other substance use. As one of the hardest hit populations in America's opioid epidemic, Southwest Ohio residents are all-too-familiar with the ravages of addiction. Many people in Ohio communities have been affected by the opioid crisis, a national public health emergency for almost six years now. For comparison, the COVID-19...

### **National News**

#### **Study finds medications for alcohol use disorder rarely given to youth and young adults on public insurance**

Heavy drinking commonly begins in adolescence and is a known risk factor for the development of alcohol use disorder (AUD). Data from adult clinical trials suggest that offering evidence-based medications for AUD to younger adults could promote their engagement in treatment and improve clinical outcomes. But are those medications being used when and where they are needed? In a review of claims data for youth insured by Medicaid in 15 U.S. states, a team of researchers found that most youth with a diagnosis of AUD do not receive medications as part of their therapy, despite...

#### **Alcohol harm reduction can also reduce other substance use**

Quitting alcohol or drugs was not a top priority for people experiencing homelessness in a harm reduction treatment study, yet participants still reduced their use of both. A different approach than traditional abstinence-based programs, harm reduction treatment for alcohol use disorder, also called HaRT-A, has patients set their own goals. In a study of 308 people experiencing homelessness, the

participants receiving harm reduction treatment set goals of meeting basic needs and improving quality of life well above quitting alcohol and other substances. Yet harm reduction treatment still led to more...

### **Education on under-prescribed drug helps reduce cravings for those with alcohol use disorder, study finds**

Not only is alcohol one of the world's most abused drugs, but alcohol-related deaths trail only tobacco, poor diet and physical activity, and illegal drugs as the leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States. To assist people trying to recover from alcohol use disorder, Jason Ipsarides conducted a study as a doctoral student at the University of Missouri's Sinclair School of Nursing. The study helped raise awareness about the benefits of naltrexone, an opioid antagonist that blocks the receptors in the brain associated with the reinforcement of addictive behaviors, such as alcohol use disorder...

### **Adolescent drinking is associated with cortical thinning, altered neurotransmission in young adults, finds study**

During adolescence, the brain undergoes intense development and is particularly susceptible to the deleterious effects of alcohol use. According to findings from a recent follow-up study in Finland, young adults whose heavy drinking began in adolescence have lower cortical gray matter thickness and altered neurotransmission. The findings were published in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. Previous research has shown that repeated binge drinking in adolescence is associated with changes in the central nervous system in adulthood, including lower gray matter volume and greater...

### **New scientific findings reveal neuroinflammation as key factor in alcohol-induced pain**

Researchers at Scripps Research have discovered that chronic alcohol consumption can increase sensitivity to pain through two distinct molecular mechanisms: one related to alcohol intake and the other to alcohol withdrawal. This finding, published in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*, sheds light on the intricate relationship between alcohol and pain. The researchers sought to better understand the relationship between chronic pain and alcohol use disorder. They wanted to investigate the underlying causes of different types of alcohol-related pain, such as alcoholic neuropathy and...

### **Mouse models of adolescent binge drinking reveal key long-lasting brain changes**

"What we're seeing here," said Nikki Crowley, assistant professor in biology and biomedical engineering and Huck Early Chair in Neurobiology and Neural Engineering, "is that if adolescent binge drinking knocks neurons off this trajectory, they might not be able to get back, even if the alcohol consumption stops." The prefrontal cortex is a key brain region for executive functioning, risk assessment and

decision-making. According to Crowley, it's not fully formed in adolescents and is still maturing in humans until around age 25. Disruptions to its development in young people may have serious and...

### **Pandemic alcohol use linked to nervous system disruption in pregnant and postpartum women**

Increased alcohol use among pregnant and postpartum women during the COVID-19 pandemic was associated with autonomic nervous system dysregulation, known to negatively affect resilience to change and further exacerbate the risk of stress-related mental health disorders and substance use, a new study published in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research* suggests. The findings, although preliminary, underline the potential for a new clinical biomarker and novel personalized mobile health apps in facilitating treatment interventions. Previous research linked the pandemic...

### **Excessive alcohol consumption may accelerate Alzheimer's disease progression**

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) quickens the pace of Alzheimer's disease progression when paired with genetic susceptibility. Scripps Research and University of Bologna scientists have reported in the journal *eNeuro* that repeated alcohol intoxication is associated with changes to gene expression indicative of disease progression in the brains of mice that are genetically predisposed to Alzheimer's. When repeatedly exposed to intoxicating amounts of alcohol, these mice showed signs of cognitive decline approximately two months sooner than they usually would. "Adding ethanol to an Alzheimer's genetic..."

### **Researchers uncover why light-to-moderate drinking is tied to better heart health**

"We are not advocating the use of alcohol to reduce the risk of heart attacks or strokes because of other concerning effects of alcohol on health," says senior author and cardiologist Ahmed Tawakol, MD, co-director of the Cardiovascular Imaging Research Center at Massachusetts General Hospital. "We wanted to understand how light to moderate drinking reduces cardiovascular disease, as demonstrated by multiple other studies. And if we could find the mechanism, the goal would be to find other approaches that could replicate or induce alcohol's protective cardiac effects without the adverse..."

### **Drug to treat cannabis use disorder shows promise in clinical trial**

A first-in-class drug engineered to selectively inhibit the signaling pathway of the cannabinoid receptor shows promise as a safe and effective treatment for cannabis use disorder (CUD), a condition where a person is unable to control their cannabis use, even though it's causing problems in their lives. In a Phase 2a clinical trial, led by Columbia University Irving Medical Center and Aelis Farma, a French biopharmaceutical company, researchers found that the candidate drug, AEF0117,

significantly reduced the effects of cannabis in daily cannabis smokers. The report, "Signaling-specific inhibition of the CB1...

### **New APA Poll Finds Americans Rate Cigarettes as Most Unsafe, Addictive Substance Among Options Surveyed**

Washington, D.C. – In a new national poll, Americans widely agreed that cigarettes are unsafe (84%) and addictive (87%), and yet a fifth (21%) reported smoking every day. The vast majority of people believe alcohol, opioids, and vapes are addictive, and about two-thirds said alcohol and opioids are unsafe, while more than three-fourths said vaping is unsafe. People were less likely to believe cannabis was addictive compared to the other substances and behaviors polled. While about three in four people consider technology addictive, most think it's safe (only 23% said it was unsafe). This is according to...

### **Many young people who have never vaped may be susceptible to starting, study suggests**

Almost two-thirds (62%) of people aged 15–30 in the U.K. who have never used e-cigarettes may be susceptible to taking up vaping in the future, according to results of an international survey by The George Institute for Global Health. The research findings were published June 13 in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. Results from an online survey of 4,007 people internationally identified exposure to e-cigarette advertising as having the second greatest effect on susceptibility, after current or past tobacco use, while perceived harmfulness reduced the likelihood of susceptibility. Prof Simone...

### **TV dramas effectively prompt middle schoolers to talk about vaping dangers**

When three prime-time TV medical dramas—"Grey's Anatomy," "New Amsterdam" and "Chicago Med"—coincidentally featured storylines about the dangers of youth vaping within a few weeks of each other, University of Pittsburgh social scientist Beth Hoffman, Ph.D., saw an opportunity to engage real-life adolescents in a discussion about electronic cigarettes. It turns out that Pittsburgh middle schoolers are very willing to talk about vaping—or e-cigarette use, which is by far the most popular way young people use tobacco—after first viewing TV clips that depicted fictional adolescents with...

### **Top health officials call for more research to support fentanyl test strips**

The government's top addiction scientists and key public health officials are calling for more research into fentanyl test strips. Amid a devastating overdose epidemic, the U.S. must ensure that test strips are legal and widely available, the officials wrote in a *New England Journal of Medicine* perspective published Saturday. Additionally, they argued, the U.S. should work to develop new products and technologies that facilitate drug-checking. The article's authors included Nora Volkow, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse; Robert Califf, the commissioner of the Food and Drug...

## **Drug companies and pharmacies reach \$17.3 billion settlement over opioid crisis**

Two large drugmakers and two of the biggest pharmacy chains finalized a \$17.3 billion deal to settle accusations by state governments that they contributed to the opioid crisis that swept across the U.S. for more than a decade and contributed to thousands of overdose deaths. The agreement —which involves Teva Pharmaceuticals; Allergan, a unit of AbbVie; CVS; and Walgreens — is the latest involving several major players blamed for the crisis. Last year, dozens of states and thousands of local communities reached a global settlement worth \$26 billion with three largest pharmaceutical wholesalers as well...

## **Teens Rarely Get Anti-Addiction Meds When Treated for Opioid Misuse**

TUESDAY, June 13, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- The medication buprenorphine normalizes brain function in people addicted to opioids, but teens rarely receive it at U.S. treatment centers, a new study finds. Only one in four adolescent residential treatment centers in the United States uses the medication to treat opioid use disorder, according to research out of Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). "These residential treatment centers see some of the most vulnerable adolescents in our communities, but they don't offer the standard of care for these kids," said study lead author Dr. Caroline King, who conducted...

## **Men died of overdose at 2-3 times greater a rate than women in the U.S. in 2020-2021**

Men were significantly more vulnerable than women to overdose deaths involving opioid and stimulant drugs in 2020-2021, according to a new study analyzing death records data from across the United States. The study found that men had a 2–3 times greater rate of overdose mortality from opioids (like fentanyl and heroin) and psychostimulants (like methamphetamine and cocaine). While it has been known that men use drugs at higher rates than women, the researchers found that this alone does not explain the gap in overdose deaths, noting that biological, behavioral, and social factors...

## **Researchers identify new treatment targets for chronic pain patients**

Exposure to opioids under chronic pain conditions produces unique gene expression changes in brain regions associated with cognition, emotion, and reward, according to preclinical research conducted at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and published June 8 in Nature Neuroscience. The study highlights new molecules that might serve as specific targets for chronic pain patients to enable them to move beyond opioid treatments. Chronic pain and opioid use disorder are two highly prevalent conditions. During the opioid epidemic in the United States, many chronic pain patients became reliant...

## **Study finds a dramatic increase in the use of non-LSD hallucinogens among young adults**

Young adults ages 19 to 30 nearly doubled their past 12-month use of non-LSD hallucinogens in the United States from 2018 to 2021, according to a study by the University of Michigan and Columbia University. In 2018, the prevalence of young adults' past-year use of non-LSD hallucinogens was 3.4%. In 2021, that use increased to 6.6%. The results, published in the journal *Addiction*, come from the Monitoring the Future study, conducted by a team of professors at the U-M Institute for Social Research and funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which is part of the National Institutes of Health.

## **Lesbians, Gays Suffer More Mental Health Issues, Drug Use Problems: Survey**

WEDNESDAY, June 14, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- Lesbians, gays and bisexuals are experiencing more mental health and substance use issues than their heterosexual peers, researchers say. According to a new government report released Tuesday, this includes major depressive episodes, serious thoughts of suicide, and more misuse of alcohol and drugs. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health includes a question about sexual orientation and has since 2015. Although that question on this 2021-2022 report from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) focused on...

## **Few are tackling stigma in addiction care. Some in Seattle want to change that**

Johnny Bousquet should have gone to urgent care earlier. He has insurance and plenty of sick time. But after decades of feeling beat up, ignored, and shamed by the medical system as a recovering addict, Bousquet says he avoids it all together — often choosing instead to engage in a game of chicken with whatever ailment he's battling. This time, he was losing. His flu-like symptoms worsened and stretched on for weeks. Finally, one morning — in a delirium of nausea and unrelenting thirst — he called his co-worker to tell her he wasn't coming in and drove himself to a hospital in west Seattle. Staff took some labs and...

## **What harm reduction practitioners want you to know about the practice**

In the back of the Outside In office are cabinets filled with boxes of supplies. They're what's called "safer-use supplies," which include syringes, wound care, mixing cups and drug pipes. To Haven Wheelock, each box of supplies at the Portland medical and youth service nonprofit has a purpose: To prevent people from dying. "Things like smoking supplies are a really important tool for overdose prevention," Wheelock said. "You're not gonna get HIV, Hepatitis C, smoking drugs. It also allows for people to use more slowly." Wheelock runs the Drug Users Health Services program at Outside In, which provides these...



### **Yale Researchers to Study MDMA, Methylone as Possible Treatments for Veterans with PTSD**

Two Yale Department of Psychiatry scientists have been awarded a federal research grant to study the effects of the drugs MDMA and methylone as possible treatments for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Alfred Kaye, MD, PhD, assistant professor of psychiatry, and Christopher Pittenger, MD, PhD, Elizabeth Mears and House Jameson Professor of Psychiatry, are principal investigator and senior partner investigator, respectively, on the three-year, \$1 million grant funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. Their preclinical research will seek to better understand how MDMA and...

### **USFDA Approves LaNeo MDMA for Clinical Trial Use in the United States**

Vancouver, BC – June 9, 2023 - PharmAla Biotech Holdings Inc. ("PharmAla")(CSE:MDMA)(OTC:PMBHF), a biotechnology company focused on the research, development, and manufacturing of MDXX class molecules (including MDMA), is pleased to report that the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) has approved a clinical trial utilizing PharmAla's LaNeo MDMA Investigational Medical Product (IMP) capsules (40mg). This is the first time that PharmAla's IMP has been approved for trial use in the United States. "While we've had great success with many regulators around...

### **Unhealthy Relationship: Food Addiction Affects 1 in 8 Americans Over 50**

Much higher percentages of possible addiction to processed food are seen among older adults who are overweight or experiencing poor mental health or isolation. Whether you call them comfort foods, highly processed foods, junk foods, empty calories, or just some of Americans' favorite foods and drinks, a sizable percentage of older Americans have an unhealthy relationship with them, according to a new poll. In fact, about 13% of people aged 50 to 80 showed signs of addiction to such foods and beverages in the past year, the new data from the National Poll on Healthy Aging suggest. The percentage...

## **Funding Opportunities**



[PAR-23-178](#)

[NIH Neuroscience Development for Advancing the Careers of a Diverse Research Workforce \(R25 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)



[NOT-DA-24-010](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Impacts of Psychedelic and Dissociative Drug Policy Changes on Public Health Outcomes](#)

[NOT-DA-24-009](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Xylazine: Understanding its Use and the Consequences](#)

[NOT-DA-23-027](#)

[Pre-Solicitation Notice: Assessment of Potential Substance Abuse Treatment Medications in Nonhuman Primate Models, RFP: 75N95023R00047](#)

### **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 opportunity, to ensure coordination and to facilitate assistance with approaches.

### **[KFC Foundation Invites Applications for 'Kentucky Fried Wish' Community Grants](#)**

[Deadline: June 30, 2023](#)

The KFC Foundation invites applications to its community giving program, Kentucky Fried Wishes. The program will provide 50 organizations with grants of \$10,000 to fund a project on their wish list. Grants will be awarded for tangible, actionable projects that are feasible to accomplish with \$10,000 and make an immediate impact in the community. Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, governmental entities, or other IRS-recognized charitable organizations that have been in existence for a minimum of two years. For complete application instructions, see the KFC Foundation website. Grant recipients are required to recognize the KFC Foundation in the project and allow it to be publicized and shared by the KFC Foundation. Recipients also are required to submit photos/videos, and a report of project expenses and receipts at six months and 12 months after the project has been awarded.

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