

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**

#### **Could Kentucky Approve the Use of Psychedelics to Treat Opioid Addiction?**

The commission that manages the state's opioid-settlement money voted June 13 to hold two public hearings to discuss the idea of funding development of an opioid-use disorder treatment using the psychedelic drug ibogaine. Two members of the Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission questioned the idea, one saying it seems to benefit a company developing a treatment, but the head of the commission, who proposed the idea, said discussion about his proposal would have to happen at those hearings, not at the commission's meeting. "The first order of business is to determine whether this is a pathway that should be pursued with an explanation of what ibogaine..."

#### **Event for children with addicted parents sees record crowd**

VERSAILLES, Ky. (LEX 18) — One man spoke with LEX 18 about how his decades-long battle with drugs and alcohol tore his family apart. Now he has an organization to help kids that are watching their parents go through the same struggles. "I was in active addiction for 28 years. I took my kids to shoplift when they thought they were going to get ice cream," said Andrew Hager. I harmed them and caused a lot of trauma. It wasn't the tangible things, it was the intangible things because my kids wondered if their father was okay, if he's eaten, if he's alive," he said. Now sober, he founded Blameless kids, an organization to give kids of parents in an active addiction a chance to share their stories. Giving a...

### **89% of adults in Indiana report gambling in past year**

When gambling first became legal in Indiana, options were limited to lottery scratch-off tickets and draw games; after that, it was riverboat casinos. Fast forward more than 30 years later, and anyone over 18 can place their bet with a cellphone. According to a new survey from Prevention Insights, a center housed within the Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington, 89% of adults in Indiana participated in some form of gambling in the past year, which is slightly above the national rate of 88%. "With gambling expansions throughout the years, and most recently the inclusion of sports betting, anyone can carry a gambling device in their hand: their phone," said Mary Lay, operations...

## **National News**

### **Drinking alcohol weekly could be connected to 61 different diseases, study finds**

Alcohol use has been linked to 61 different diseases, most of which had not been identified as having drinking-related outcomes by the World Health Organization (WHO), according to a new study. Beyond the more widely known conditions — such as liver cirrhosis, stroke and gastric cancers — a new study identified links to diseases including gout, cataracts, ulcers and some fractures, according to a press release announcing the findings. Researchers from the University of Oxford in England and Peking University in Beijing analyzed self-reported data from more than 512,000 adults in China related to 207 total...

### **Intoxicated teenage rats wearing 'FitBites' found to experience sleep disturbance long after withdrawing from alcohol**

Adolescent rats exposed to alcohol vapor experience persistent sleep disruption after withdrawal, as measured by Fitbit-like tracking devices, a new study has shown. The findings, published in *Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental Research*, provide insight into the relationship between sleep disturbance and heavy drinking in humans. Although adolescents and young adults may be particularly affected by sleep disturbances associated with drinking, little is known about that connection or its mechanisms. Plausibly, the link between disrupted circadian rhythm and substance use may operate in both...

### **Women without children at age 35 are at highest risk of binge drinking, alcohol use disorder, finds study**

Excessive drinking and alcohol-related deaths are increasing at an alarming rate among women, particularly among reproductive-aged women in their late 20s and 30s. Traditionally, women tend to reduce their alcohol consumption once they have children, but in recent years, more middle-aged women have delayed or skipped motherhood. This growing trend in women who are delaying or foregoing parenting is contributing to an increase in women at highest risk for excessive alcohol use, according to a new study led by Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH). Published in the journal *Addiction*...

### **Changes in alcohol consumption associated with changes in depression symptoms**

Changes in alcohol consumption tend to accompany changes in symptoms of depression, according to a study published in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. Individuals who reported reductions in alcohol use simultaneously reported reductions in depression symptoms, even when their alcohol consumption exceeded healthy levels. Similarly, those who endorsed increased alcohol use also reported increased depression, whether or not the amount they drank was at a level considered unhealthy. The findings may motivate individuals to reduce their drinking to improve their mood and...

### **People with alcohol use disorder impaired after heavy drinking, despite claims of higher tolerance**

While heavy drinkers can tolerate a certain amount of alcohol better than light or moderate drinkers, the concept of "holding your liquor" is more nuanced than commonly believed, according to new research from the University of Chicago. The researchers conducted the study with three groups of young adults in their 20s with different drinking patterns. They found that drinkers with alcohol use disorder (or AUD, traditionally known as alcoholism) displayed less impairment on fine motor and cognitive tasks than light or heavy social drinkers after consuming a standard intoxicating dose—equivalent...

### **Legal recreational cannabis use and binge drinking is on the rise for older adults, research shows**

New research at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health has examined changes in binge drinking after the implementation of recreational cannabis laws. Analysis of national survey data from Americans aged 12 and older showed that past-month binge drinking increased overall among people aged 31 and over from 2008 to 2019. At the same time, binge drinking declined overall among people aged 12-30. The results are published online in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*. The most substantial declines in binge drinking were observed among people ages 12-20 (from 17.5% in 2008 to 11%...

### **Cannabis use found to be lower among Illinois teens living in ZIP codes with medical dispensaries**

Illinois teens who live in ZIP codes that have medical cannabis dispensaries are less likely to use the drug, new research found. In a statewide survey, about 18.3% of the youths living in Illinois ZIP codes with medical dispensaries reported they used cannabis during the prior year compared with 22.4% of those who lived in ZIP codes without these businesses, researchers at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign found. They reported the findings in the journal *Cannabis*. Likewise, fewer students—12%—with medical dispensaries in their ZIP codes reported they had used cannabis during the prior 30 days...

### **Cannabis compound CBD found in common Brazilian shrub**

Scientists have discovered cannabidiol, a compound in marijuana known as CBD, in a common Brazilian plant, opening potential new avenues to produce the increasingly popular substance, a lead researcher said Thursday. The team found CBD in the fruits and flowers of a plant known as *Trema micrantha blume*, a shrub which grows across much of the South American country and is often considered a weed, molecular biologist Rodrigo Moura Neto of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro told AFP. CBD, increasingly used by some to treat conditions including epilepsy, chronic pain and anxiety, is one of...

### **Sales of e-cigs packed with nicotine soar as regulators try to crack down**

When the FDA first asserted the authority to regulate e-cigarettes in 2016, many people assumed the agency would quickly get rid of vapes with flavors like cotton candy, gummy bears, and Froot Loops that appeal to kids. Instead, the FDA allowed all e-cigarettes already on the market to stay while their manufacturers applied for the OK to market them. Seven years later, vaping has ballooned into an \$8.2 billion industry, and manufacturers are flooding the market with thousands of products — most sold illegally and without FDA permission — that can be far more addictive. “The FDA has failed to protect...

### **Face to Face With Fentanyl**

We gave a lot of naloxone (Narcan) last weekend. Some for overuse of prescription drugs. Most of it was probably for fentanyl overdoses. Fentanyl. The potent synthetic opioid that brings death in its wake. It is ubiquitous, it seems; taken on its own or mixed with other drugs by illegal manufacturers. That word fentanyl is in the press so often. According to the CDC, more than 150 people in the U.S. die every single day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl. Fentanyl, one of the leading causes of unintentional death among Americans 18-45 years old. It's easy to shake our heads and scroll to...

### **Gabapentinoid, Opioid Prescriptions Rose in Older Patients After Surgery**

Both gabapentinoid and opioid prescribing rose among post-surgical older adults, serial cross-sectional data showed. Across nearly 500,000 Medicare recipients, the rate of new postoperative gabapentinoid prescribing increased from 2.3% in 2014 to 5.2% in 2018 ( $P < 0.001$ ), according to Tasce Bongiovanni, MD, MPP, of the University of California San Francisco, and co-authors. Opioid prescribing rose during the same period, from 56% to 59% ( $P < 0.001$ ), while concomitant prescribing nearly tripled, jumping from 1.6% in 2014 to 4.1% in 2018 ( $P < 0.001$ ), they noted in *JAMA Network Open*. "The use of...

### **White House ‘naloxone summit’ omitting prominent advocates for lower costs**

The invite list for the White House’s upcoming “summit” on naloxone pricing and accessibility has some noteworthy omissions. Two of the most prominent

organizations focused on providing cheaper overdose-reversal medications will be conspicuously absent from Tuesday's event: Harm Reduction Therapeutics, a nonprofit drug manufacturer currently seeking approval for a naloxone nasal spray, and Remedy Alliance, a group that distributes cheap naloxone to harm-reduction groups across the country. Broadening access to naloxone is a key element of the Biden administration's strategy to combat the opioid crisis. But the medication's high price has long been a barrier to individuals...

### **Xylazine appears to worsen the life-threatening effects of opioids in rats**

A new study in rats suggests that xylazine, the active ingredient in a non-opioid veterinary tranquilizer not approved for human use, can worsen the life-threatening effects of opioids. The findings imply that when used in combination with opioid drugs such as fentanyl and heroin, xylazine may damage the ability of the brain to get enough oxygen, which is one of the most dangerous effects of opioid drugs and can lead to death. The study (link is external), published in *Psychopharmacology*, was led by researchers at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health. Research...

### **Cutbacks on Opioids Around Surgery May Do More Harm Than Good**

TUESDAY, June 20, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- Many doctors have stopped giving opioids for pain, even during surgery, because of the opioid addiction crisis in the United States. But a new study questions the wisdom of this approach. Restricting the drugs during surgery may do more harm than good, researchers report. "The opioid crisis is a major motivator for mitigating the risks of opioid usage," said study co-author Dr. Laura Santa Cruz Mercado, who was a research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) at the time of the study. "But appropriate opioid administration in the operating room may..."

### **Reducing bias and stigma associated with medication-assisted treatment can improve care**

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT), such as naltrexone, is a well-documented successful treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD). However, there are multiple barriers for clinicians to use MAT, including clinician lack of confidence in using the treatment, their own misconceptions about the patient population, and, until recently, federally required training. Additionally, there is a stigma associated with MAT and the patients who would most benefit from it. Improving access to MAT training and integrating it into clinician programs and curriculums may remove identified barriers, decrease stigma, and...

### **Study finds assessment for opioid withdrawal doubles with use of automated prompt**

A program nudging emergency department clinicians to identify and treat opioid use disorder was found to double assessment for opioid withdrawal and increase initiation of evidence-based treatment, a new study from the Perelman School of

Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania showed. A triage screening question to be asked by nurses was applied alongside an automated nudge in the electronic health record to increase clinicians' awareness of patients with opioid use disorder and improve the likelihood patients would receive more comprehensive care in the emergency department. In...

### **'Tranq': the flesh-rotting drug adding to America's opioid crisis**

Opioid addict Martin has seen the deadly fentanyl replace heroin as the most prevalent drug in New York. Now he's trying to avoid "tranq," a flesh-eating drug increasingly causing concern across America. "It makes holes in your body, your skin," said the 45-year-old, whose wounds on his legs and arms signify he may have unknowingly injected the animal sedative, officially named xylazine and commonly called the "zombie drug." The tranquilizer, approved for veterinary use by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), has infiltrated the illegal drug market in the United States, with producers increasingly...

### **States continue to leverage Medicaid Section 1115 Waivers to address opioid crisis**

With the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency on May 11, 2023, and the end of Medicaid's continuous enrollment provisions meant to protect coverage during the pandemic, millions are expected to lose Medicaid coverage in the coming months. Ten states have still not expanded access to Medicaid, according to data released today from the Center for Public Health Law Research at Temple University Beasley School of Law (CPHLR). This denies access to care to approximately 1.9 million people living in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin...

## **Funding Opportunities**



[PAR-23-194](#)

[Substance Use/Substance Use Disorder Dissertation Research Award \(R36 Clinical Trials Not Allowed\)](#)

