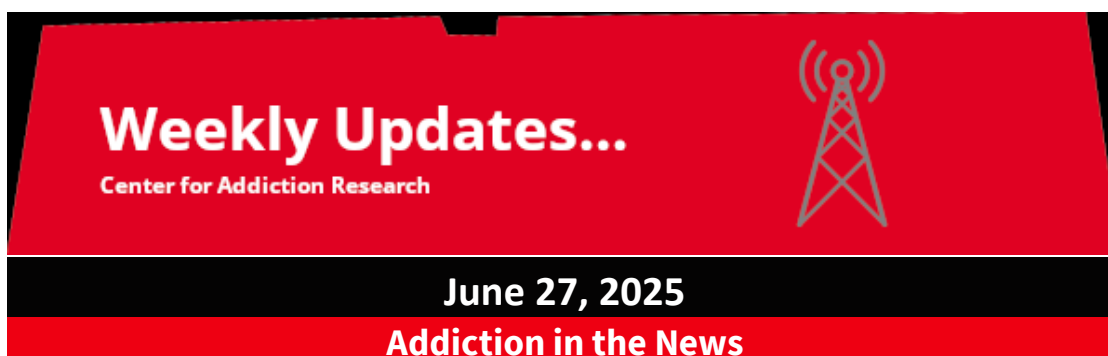


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu))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

#### **Center for Addiction Research 2025 Summer Speaker Series Event**

Back by popular demand, the Center for Addiction Research will hold its second virtual Summer Speaker Series event, Wednesday, July 9 at 12pm on "Endocannabinoid Regulation of Repeated Stress-Cocaine Interactions" with presenter, **CAR member, Dr. Jayme McReynolds**. All presentations will be held virtually and are free and open to the public. [\(PDF event flyer attached\)](#)

**>> Register for any of the presentations**

#### **'Resourceful, resilient and ready to work' | How a local production lead found strength in addiction recovery**

LEBANON, Ohio — Spread across the floor at JBM Packaging's warehouse in Lebanon, workers carefully assemble shipments and orders. "JBM is definitely like a family, it's like a big family," said Lindsey Watzek, a JBM Packaging production lead. Something you can't see are the hidden stories of recovery and the dozens of employees who have overcome addiction. "Substance use is a disease that you live with for the rest of your life," Watzek said. Watzek told me that just a few years ago, she was in prison, wondering if there was a life beyond her cell. "Did you think you were going to get a second chance?" I asked. "I thought once I had a felony, pretty much, that my life was over," Watzek said. However, she found...

### **'Saving lives' | Why \$250K could help more than the hundreds of people struggling with addiction in jail**

CINCINNATI — When Scott Kerr first started working at the Hamilton County Justice Center, he handled addiction very differently. “When people came in withdrawing from opioids, they went cold turkey,” Kerr said. “We pretty much put them in there and let them sweat it out for the week.” Kerr, an administrative captain who now runs the jail, began working there two decades ago. Now, jail officials give medication to help people with withdrawal and begin recovery. But that costs money. “The medication-assisted treatment doesn't work without the medication,” Kerr said. He tells me officials spent more than \$100,000 on addiction medication last year. And he says prices continue to go up. “We're just doing a lot more...

### **Trumbull County overdose deaths down so far in 2025**

TRUMBULL COUNTY, OH - The number of drug overdose deaths is down so far this year in Trumbull County, an area that experienced a record number of deaths during the height of the opioid epidemic. The Trumbull County Mental Health and Recovery Board has reported 12 deaths since the end of April. In 2024, the county recorded a total of 61 drug overdose deaths for the year, which was down from the 111 reported in 2023. The total number of drug overdoses is down 51% compared to the same time in 2023. The Mental Health and Recovery Board said the state's free Narcan kits and wider access to the overdose reversal drug is helping drive down the numbers. Niles Police Department Captain John Marshall told 21...

### **Alphabet-Backed Addiction Provider OneFifteen to Close**

Alphabet-backed addiction treatment center OneFifteen will close all of its clinical services on July 20. This marks the end of Google's parent company's venture into brick-and-mortar substance use disorder services. The provider was founded in 2019 when Google's life science-focused sister company Verily teamed up with providers Kettering Health Network and Premier Health to form the nonprofit opioid use disorder treatment center. OneFifteen sought to change care by using analytics and wrap-around services. The provider sat on a 4.5-acre campus and offered inpatient, residential and outpatient substance use disorder services. “As Mayor of the City of Dayton, I am deeply disappointed by the announcement...

### **Jessamine Co. nonprofit opens store for gamers, provides resources for people with addiction**

NICHOLASVILLE, Ky. (LEX 18) — Jessamine County has a new spooky store in town, but it's not Halloween all the time there, it was a grand opening for a new gaming store that is also a safe space for people. On Saturday, after months of planning and looking for the perfect location. Chris West has opened his new store in Nicholasville: 'Scream for Help.' Back in October, LEX 18 shared with you West's story of giving away free Halloween costumes to kids in honor of his brother, Jeremy Powell, who lost his battle to addiction. That's when the non-profit 'Scream

for Help was created. "This place is always going to be somewhere that somebody can go and get the resources and help that they need. Especially when it comes...

### **Hoosier youth tobacco use lowest in decades**

INDIANAPOLIS -- The 2024 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey was released today, June 24, and results show tobacco use is continuing to decline in the Hoosier state, with the number of high school students using at its lowest level in two decades. The use of e-cigarettes for high school youth dropped from 18.5 percent in 2012 to five percent in 2024. Despite the decrease, concern remains due to the rise in popularity among oral nicotine pouches and flavored nicotine products. "We are encouraged by the continued decline in youth tobacco and e-cigarette use, yet we remain vigilant in addressing nicotine addiction and the appeal of flavored products," said State Health Commissioner Lindsay Weaver, M.D., FACEP. Weaver...

## **National News**

### **Alcohol alters gene function in the differentiating cells of the embryo, study finds**

Exposure to alcohol during the first weeks of embryonic development changes gene activity and cellular metabolism. In laboratory cultures, it was found that the first cells of the nervous system are the most sensitive to alcohol. This supports the recommendation to abstain from alcohol already when planning a pregnancy. During the tightly regulated gastrulation, embryonic cells differentiate into the three germ layers—endoderm, mesoderm, and ectoderm—which eventually give rise to all tissues and organs. The late, renowned developmental biologist Lewis Wolpert once stated: "It is not birth, marriage, or death..."

### **'Surprising': Experts React to Report U.S. Plans to Weaken Alcohol Guidance**

Updated Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which could be released as early as this month, will drop a long-standing recommendation to limit alcohol consumption to one or two drinks per day, Reuters reported this week, citing three sources familiar with the matter. It's "surprising, especially given what we now understand about how alcohol impacts health," Lindsay Malone, MS, a registered dietitian nutritionist at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, told MedPage Today by email. "In the absence of clear guidance, people are left wondering: how much, if any, is actually safe and healthy?" she said. "I don't see any..."

### **Sexual minority youth of Latin American descent require tailored alcohol interventions, study suggests**

"Latinx" is a gender-neutral term used instead of "Latino" and "Latina" that refers to individuals of Latin American descent. Latinx and sexual minority youth (SMY) report higher rates of alcohol use than white and heterosexual youth. New research finds that Latinx SMY experience and cope with discrimination in unique ways, which can have an impact on their alcohol treatment response. These findings will be shared at the 48th annual scientific meeting of the Research Society on Alcohol

(RSA) in New Orleans, Louisiana. "Latinx youth report higher rates of drinking, intoxication, and heavy alcohol use than non-Latinx white..."

### **Young women experience less craving for cannabis following alcohol consumption**

Alcohol and cannabis are commonly used together by young adults and rates of their co-use are increasing. Recent research has found that following any amount of alcohol use, young women experienced less craving for cannabis, whereas young men experienced more craving for cannabis following any alcohol use. "National surveys found that in 2002, 20%–21% of young adults, whether college students or not, reported past year co-use of alcohol and cannabis," explained Nolan Ramer, postdoctoral fellow at the Medical University of South Carolina. "By 2018, 25%–26% of this group reported past year co-use of alcohol and..."

### **Study explores genetic link between cannabis use and psychiatric disorders**

Cannabis, also known as marijuana or weed, is widely consumed worldwide, whether for recreational or medicinal purposes. Over the past decades, the use of cannabis has been fully legalized or decriminalized in various countries worldwide, including Canada, many U.S. states, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain and Portugal. While some studies have found that cannabis and especially cannabidiol (i.e., the non-intoxicating compound contained in it) can have medicinal effects, others have linked the abuse of its psychoactive variations (i.e., containing tetrahydrocannabinol or THC) with a greater risk of being diagnosed with...

### **E-cigarette and cannabis social media posts pose risks for teens, study finds**

Teens who see social media posts showing cannabis or e-cigarettes, including from friends and influencers, are more likely to later start using those substances or to report using them in the past month, according to surveys done by researchers at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Viewing such posts was linked to cannabis use, as well as dual use of cannabis and e-cigarettes (vapes). Dual use refers to youth who have used both cannabis and e-cigarettes at some point. The results are published in JAMA Network Open. The findings come amid a decline in youth e-cigarette use, reported in 2024 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration...

### **Tobacco control efforts protect 6.1 billion people – WHO's new report**

The World Health Organization (WHO) today released its report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2025 at the World Conference on Tobacco Control in Dublin, warning that action is needed to maintain and accelerate progress in tobacco control as rising industry interference challenges tobacco policies and control efforts. The report focuses on the six proven WHO MPOWER tobacco control measures to reduce tobacco use, which claims over 7 million lives a year: Monitoring tobacco use and prevention policies; Protecting people from tobacco smoke with smoke-free air legislation; Offering help to quit tobacco use...

### **Some disposable vapes may release higher amounts of toxic metals than traditional cigarettes**

Brightly colored, inexpensive and disposable electronic cigarettes and vapes continue to gain popularity. These devices turn flavored nicotine-containing liquid into a vapor that people inhale over hundreds or thousands of puffs—commonly called vaping. Researchers report in ACS Central Science that after a few hundred puffs, some disposable vaping devices release higher amounts of metals and metalloids than older refillable e-cigarettes and traditional cigarettes, thereby raising a user's risk of health problems. "Our study highlights the hidden risk of these new and popular disposable electronic cigarettes—with hazardous levels of...

### **Study finds pregnant women who vape face fewer toxins than smokers**

Pregnant women are exposed to lower levels of toxic chemicals if they vape during pregnancy compared with if they smoke cigarettes, according to new research led by scientists at City St George's, University of London and published today in Nicotine and Tobacco Research. Stopping smoking during pregnancy is a key health priority for both the mother and developing baby, with more pregnant women choosing to vape as a way to stop smoking. Until now, there's been a lack of reliable data on exposure to harmful substances that can result from vaping during pregnancy. In the first study to rigorously compare exposure to...

### **Handy pen-like tool could help detect opioids from the skin**

Opioids like fentanyl, morphine and oxycodone are the drugs most linked to overdoses in the U.S. Typical screening methods for drug usage involve collection of blood, saliva or urine samples. Now, in Analytical Chemistry, researchers demonstrate a pen-like tool that can quickly and non-invasively collect molecules from the skin's surface to be screened for opioids with mass spectrometry. "After seeing Dr. [Livia] Eberlin's fascinating work using the 'MasSpec Pen' on non-destructive sampling of tissues for cancer identification, I became very interested in investigating how this technology could be used for rapid, non-invasive...

### **Black, Hispanic patients significantly less likely to receive key addiction medications, study finds**

Black and Hispanic people are “significantly less likely” to receive two medications used to treat opioid addiction, according to a new study. Compared to white patients, Black and Hispanic patients were 17.1% and 16.2% less likely, respectively, to receive either buprenorphine or naltrexone within 180 days of a health care event related to their substance use, like a nonfatal overdose or addiction-related infection. The study, published Thursday in JAMA Network Open, adds to a large body of evidence that the quality of Americans’ addiction treatment is heavily influenced by their race. It is the first research, however, to...

### **Female veterans, veterans from racial and ethnic minority groups at higher risk of dying from opioid overdose**

Prior studies have shown veterans are particularly at risk of dying by opioid overdose and the possibility of that occurring has been rising steadily over the past two decades. From 2010–2019, there was a 61.2% increase in risk of overdose death among male veterans. Interestingly, this increased risk was not observed among female veterans, despite rates of opioid use disorder (OUD) rising more quickly among women than men in the general population. Racial disparities in opioid overdose deaths are also prominent with a significant increase in deaths due to opioids among all racial and ethnic minority veterans, except...

### **Innovative toolkit blazes trail for healthcare providers to learn with patients struggling with opioid use, chronic pain**

It's difficult to overstate the corrosive impact of Canada's ongoing opioid crisis. Since 2016, there have been over 40,000 opioid-related deaths across the country, devastating Canadian families from all walks of life. Opioid-related hospitalizations and calls to paramedics have ballooned. New approaches for physicians and patients are urgently needed to help stem the tide of society's opioid use problems. Now, a new collaboration involving the University of Ottawa takes a focused look at a recently developed patient toolkit designed to be a hub for opioid-related resources that's not only helping optimize therapeutic outcomes but also...

### **Innovations for Substance Use Disorders (I4SUD)**

**Application Deadline for the 2025 cohort: July 6, 2025**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is pleased to inform you about an upcoming opportunity for researchers and inventors to learn about entrepreneurship and biomedical product development in substance use disorders (SUD). Innovations for Substance Use Disorders (I4SUD) is a certificate program offered through the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School Office of Executive Education. The program will enroll at least 30 academic researchers who are motivated to solve challenges related to SUD. Participants will work individually or in teams to assess if their pharmaceutical, digital health, or medical device-related inventions can be transformed into innovations to address problems in SUD. I4SUD combines a five-day visit to Baltimore for workshops with world-class faculty and experts, clinical site visits, and community building; asynchronous and synchronous online activities; and the development of a commercialization plan to make participants competitive for follow-on funding. The program culminates in a pitch competition with an opportunity to compete for a cash prize and receive feedback from expert panels. Participants will be awarded a certificate from the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School Office of Executive Education upon completing the program. The program will run in Fall 2025. For more information about I4SUD, please contact Supriya Munshaw, [smunsha1@jhmi.edu](mailto:smunsha1@jhmi.edu). The I4SUD program is open to researchers at academic institutions in the United States at any stage of their career. The program is consistent with and advances the mission of

NIDA as described in 42 U.S.C. 285o in that they support the development of research ideas that would further an understanding and management of drug use, misuse and substance use disorders (SUD). Therefore, any applications pursuing ideas in the areas of alcohol use disorder and pain are not encouraged. However, if you are interested in repurposing an existing technology for a new use in SUD, extending a research observation or discovery made in a different scientific field into the SUD area, devising a new business model or distribution/delivery channel that unlocks new value, or simply bringing a product or service to a previously underserved customer in the SUD market, we are looking forward to hearing from you. This educational program is administered as a cooperative agreement between NIDA and Johns Hopkins University. Qualified participants may receive a full scholarship, which includes round-trip travel and lodging. You do not need prior experience in entrepreneurship or business development to apply, but you do need a strong interest in SUDs and a willingness to learn and collaborate with others. Don't miss this chance to join a select group of SUD researchers and inventors who are ready to make a difference in the world!

### **Curbing the overdose crisis requires professional standards, patient safety**

One of us, Ryan, fights every single day to maintain long-term recovery from a substance use disorder that nearly cost him everything. The other, Teresa, lives with the permanent, aching void left by the loss of her beloved son Spencer at age 24 to a preventable overdose. This loss came after losing her 17-year-old son, Graham, in 2014 shortly after leaving rehab. Losing both of her children to this epidemic has left an irreplaceable emptiness. We come from different places — one grounded in the hope of recovery, the other in the profound grief of loss — but we stand united by a shared, devastating understanding: The system designed...

### **FTC Sues to Stop Mercury Marketing and Others from Deceptively Advertising Substance Use Disorder Treatment Clinics**

The Federal Trade Commission filed a complaint today alleging that Mercury Marketing, LLC, and other defendants impersonated substance use disorder treatment clinics in Google search ads to deceptively route consumers trying to call those clinics to defendant clinics. "These defendants took advantage of consumers searching online for substance use disorder treatment services during one of the most difficult times in their lives," said Christopher Mufarrige, Director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. "The FTC will not hesitate to take action to stop such underhanded and illegal conduct." The FTC's complaint filed in...

### **New 'designer drugs' pose growing threat to road safety in the US**

No one could claim to be unaware of the dangers of driving under the influence of drugs (DUID): drugs can increase the time needed to react, impair coordination, alertness, and cognition, and lower inhibitions, thus encouraging reckless and aggressive driving. In the US in 2021, 10,903 people died in crashes where drugs were involved, which corresponds to 26% of all traffic deaths that year. And



because new drugs constantly hit the black market, efforts to tackle the issue can be very challenging. A new study in *Frontiers in Toxicology* has now shown the urgent need to extend current tests routinely performed after traffic crashes to...

### **FDA Approves Twice-Yearly Shot for HIV Prevention**

The FDA approved lenacapavir (Yeztugo) as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to reduce the risk of sexually acquired HIV-1 in at-risk adults and adolescents, Gilead Sciences announced on Wednesday. An injectable HIV-1 capsid inhibitor, lenacapavir marks the first and only twice-yearly PrEP option available in the U.S. "Yeztugo could be the transformative PrEP option we've been waiting for -- offering the potential to boost PrEP uptake and persistence and adding a powerful new tool in our mission to end the HIV epidemic," said Carlos del Rio, MD, of Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, in a statement. "A twice-yearly...

## **Funding Opportunities**



[RFA-OD-25-008](#)

[Tobacco Regulatory Science Small Grant Program for New Investigators \(R03 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

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