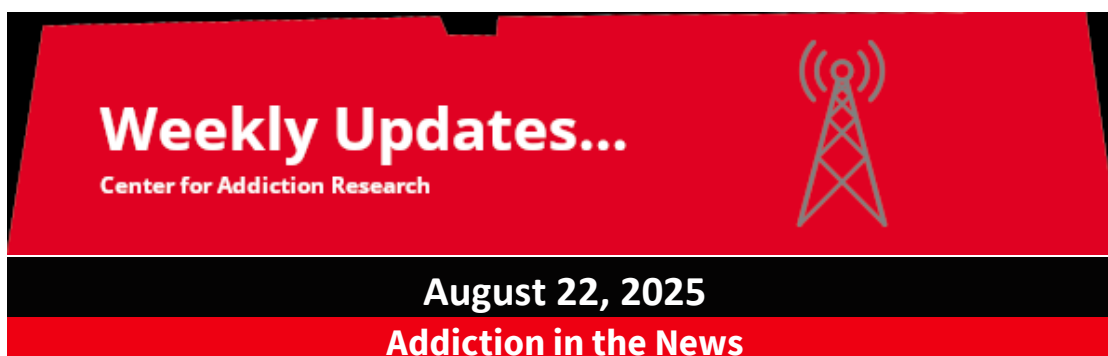


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu))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

#### **UC-UC Health Addiction Center (UCAC) Pilot Research Program**

##### **Deadlines:**

Letter of Intent Due: September 22, 2025

Full Applications Due: November 3, 2025 (before 8 am)

Notification of Awards Made: February 2026 (date TBD)

Award Dates: March 1, 2026 – February 28, 2027

**Dr. T. John Winhusen, Donald C. Harrison Endowed Chair in Medicine, Director, Center for Addiction Research, and Professor; Vice Chair of Addiction Sciences,** is pleased to announce a new pilot research program. Applications will be accepted from any full-time faculty member, resident, clinical fellow, or post-doctoral scholar whose appointment is at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. Any resulting application for funding to an outside agency must be submitted from UC. Investigators at CCHMC are not eligible for submission as PIs but can be Co-Is on proposals. The UCAC pilot program encourages applications that include interactions between basic scientists and clinicians to foster the development of translational investigations for addiction. In addition, interdisciplinary studies and studies that include participation of basic scientists or clinical researchers from other UC colleges and affiliates are encouraged.

To be considered, proposals need to focus on important problems in the field of addiction. A wide spectrum of projects can be considered relevant. Priority will be given to those projects that carry the highest potential for scientific contributions and are most likely to lead to successful application for extramural funding. Projects

with well-developed concepts and innovative ideas requiring additional data for an extramural proposal submission, particularly if an NIH study section requested such data, will be given high priority. The strategy for advancing the research project as an extramural research grant or mentored training award submission should be clearly indicated.

After initial peer review within the UC/UC Health Addiction Center (UCAC), with written critiques, the College of Medicine Office of Research will select 1 to 2 proposals to fund for a maximum of \$25,000 each. To be eligible for these funds, the Principal Investigator on the application must either hold a full-time faculty appointment at UC College of Medicine or be employed as a resident, clinical fellow, or post-doctoral fellow at UC (or by permission of the UCAC director). Eligible applicants who submit an LOI will receive instructions for full application submission in CCAPS.

Review full details and submission guidelines on the attached PDF.

### **She lost her son to fentanyl poisoning. Now she's using her story to spread awareness about its dangers.**

HAMILTON COUNTY, Ohio — When Kelli Phelps talks about her son Alex, it can be hard to hold in the emotions. She said Alex was a loving older brother, son and friend. Inside her home, one of the pictures hanging on the wall is a family photo from her daughter's wedding. "That day, specifically, he told me, 'Mom, this is the best day of my life. I'm so lucky to be alive,'" Phelps said. Phelps said her son struggled with addiction throughout his adult life, but she said he was determined about his future. "My son had a girlfriend he intended to marry, he had a college degree and wanted a future, wanted children," Phelps said. Alex was eight months sober before he died from fentanyl poisoning in November 2021. Phelps said...

### **Overdose Awareness Day and Recovery Month**

More than 1 million people, including over 58,000 Ohioans, have died from unintentional drug overdoses in the United States since the year 2000. These preventable deaths are the reason communities across Ohio and the nation come together each year on and around Aug. 31 for Overdose Awareness Day and throughout September for National Recovery Month. "This is a time to honor the lives tragically lost to overdose, support those on the path to recovery from substance use and mental health challenges, and recognize the ongoing efforts across our state and country to help individuals rebuild their lives," said Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, Director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The number...

### **Walk the Road to Recovery event**

Sponsored by Transitions

**Thursday, September 4, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Purple People Bridge

\*For more information and to RSVP, please visit

<https://www.transitionsky.org/recovery>.

### **Lake County overdose deaths continue to fall as community prepares for first Concert of Hope**

WILLOUGHBY, Ohio — Lake County will mark Overdose Awareness Day this month with a new community event, the Concert of Hope, aimed at honoring lives lost, supporting recovery and raising awareness of substance use disorder. The free, family-friendly concert will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 31, at The Fine Arts Association, 38660 Mentor Ave. in Willoughby. The event will feature the string ensemble OPUS 216, with live music curated by music therapists, along with public art creation, food trucks and resource tables in a drug-free environment. The Concert of Hope is presented in partnership with the Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board, the City of...

### **‘Designer Xanax’ designated Schedule I controlled substance in Kentucky**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (WOWK) — Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) said on Monday that bromazolam, also known as “Designer Xanax,” has received an emergency state designation as a Schedule I controlled substance. As a Schedule I substance, the drug is banned sale in Kentucky, and the move provides law enforcement the ability to make arrests for sales or possession. A release from Beshear’s office said the designation is in response to a growing number of overdose deaths from the drug. Forty-eight overdose deaths were tied to bromazolam in Kentucky in 2024. “Team Kentucky has made important progress in our fight against addiction, with three straight years of declines in overdose deaths, and we’re...

### **Optum Rx Invokes Open Meetings Law To Fight Kentucky Counties on Opioid Suits**

UnitedHealth Group’s multibillion-dollar pharmacy benefit manager, Optum Rx, is suing five Kentucky counties in an attempt to force them out of national opioid litigation against the company. Pharmacy benefit managers, often called PBMs, act as middlemen that negotiate prescription drug prices between drug companies, insurance plans, and pharmacies. Some lawyers and advocates say PBMs helped fuel the overdose crisis by failing to restrict the flow of opioid prescriptions. As governments begin exploring potential lawsuits against PBMs — a step that could represent the next wave in opioid-related litigation — Optum Rx is attempting to shut down those efforts, in some cases before they even fully take shape. In...

### **Another round of layoffs hits Addiction Recovery Care in KY, as FBI probe looms**

When Theo Shackleford got an email on a recent Friday afternoon from his employer, Addiction Recovery Care, he knew what was coming. A now-former client and peer support coordinator, Shackleford had survived four rounds of layoffs. But not this one. He recalled the two-minute, Aug. 1 meeting as such: “We regrettably inform you that your position has been dissolved. Anything we can do, feel free to reach out to HR for your case. Thank you for your dedication and work. Meeting’s over.” Shackleford said he was one of at least a dozen people laid off that day by

the for-profit company, which began with one addiction treatment center in Louisville in 2010 and now owns and operates nearly 40 facilities across Kentucky. The...

### **'I learned how to be a mom': How a Louisville program helps mothers recover from addiction**

Emilee Ward grew up with what she called the "picture-perfect family." Two parents, a dog and a white picket fence. A high performer in school, she was set up for academic success. Yet she did not always feel accepted by her peers. Ward said a lack of social acceptance caused her to develop a substance use disorder when she was about 13 years old. After she graduated high school, maintaining her good grades, she began pursuing a biology degree at the University of Louisville. But the new atmosphere caused her to spiral into severe substance abuse. "During my first organic chemistry class, I noticed that I was not the smartest person in the room anymore, which had a really negative effect on me," Ward...

## **National News**

### **Majority of Americans think alcohol bad for health: poll**

A narrow majority of Americans now believe even moderate consumption of alcohol negatively affects health, as US drinking levels continue to decline, according to a recent survey. Pollster Gallup found the number of Americans who said they drink alcohol to be at an all-time low since the poll was first conducted in 1939—a few years after the United States ended its prohibition of alcohol. The survey found 54% of Americans reported they drank alcohol either occasionally or regularly in 2025, down from at least 60% recorded between 1997 and 2023. Those who did say they drank alcohol reported it was in smaller...

### **Is moderate drinking actually healthy? Scientists say the idea is outdated**

Whether it's a glass of red wine with dinner or a celebratory cocktail on the weekend, drinking in moderation has long been considered not only socially acceptable but also perhaps even healthy. For decades, studies have suggested that moderate alcohol intake could protect the heart, reduce diabetes risk or even help you live longer. But newer research tells a different story, and it's left many people confused. What's the truth about moderate drinking? We asked Stanford Medicine experts who study alcohol from different angles—addiction, chronic disease prevention, and molecular. They all agreed on one thing: The idea...

### **Why are people drinking less in the US? A beer historian has the answers**

Americans' taste for booze could be slipping, with the percentage of those who say they consume alcohol hitting an 86-year low, according to a recent Gallup poll. Only 54% of U.S. adults polled say they drink alcohol, and those who are drinking are drinking less. It's part of an ongoing decline in drinking among Americans—and seemingly Germans as well—with the steepest drop among young people. Why are Americans ditching booze? Malcolm Purinton, an assistant teaching professor of

history at Northeastern University who specializes in the history of beer, says there are an array of factors that explain Americans' current falling...

### **Smoking cessation app with real-time support nearly doubles quit rates in clinical trial**

While smoking rates in the United States have substantially declined over the past six decades, smoking remains high among people with low incomes, leading to health disparities. A smartphone app that delivers real-time, tailored messages may hold the key to helping them quit, according to University of Oklahoma clinical trial results published in JAMA Network Open. The clinical trial compared two different smartphone tobacco cessation apps: Smart-T, which was developed by OU researchers, and QuitGuide, a product of the National Cancer Institute. Smart-T is designed to gauge users' risk of smoking throughout...

### **FDA Denies Marketing for blu Disposable E-Cigarette**

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a marketing denial order (MDO) for blu® Disposable Classic Tobacco 2.4%, an e-cigarette product manufactured by Fontem US, LLC. This means the company still must not market or distribute this product in the United States, or they risk enforcement action by FDA. The company may submit a new application for the product subject to this MDO. FDA evaluates premarket tobacco product applications (PMTAs) based on a public health standard that considers the risks and benefits of the product to the population as a whole. After reviewing the company's PMTA, FDA...

### **Youth vaping consistently linked to subsequent smoking, marijuana and alcohol use**

Vaping among teens and young people is consistently linked to subsequent smoking, marijuana and alcohol use, finds an overarching (umbrella) review of systematic reviews of the evidence, published online in the journal Tobacco Control. And it's associated with other harmful consequences, including heightened risks of asthma, cough, injuries and mental ill health as well as possibly pneumonia, bronchitis, headaches, dizziness/lightheadedness, migraine, low sperm count, and poor mouth health. The findings reinforce policy measures to restrict sales and marketing of vapes to young people, conclude the...

### **Pharmacy Barriers Can Hinder Telehealth Treatment for Opioid Addictions**

A large proportion of opioid use disorder (OUD) patients getting care via telemedicine reported missed buprenorphine doses over the past year due to pharmacy-related barriers, a cross-sectional study found. Among 601 OUD patients who responded to a survey, 31.9% reported missing buprenorphine doses due to problems filling their prescriptions, according to Marlene C. Lira, MPH, of Workit Health in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and colleagues. The number one reason (54.5%) for a fill problem was pharmacies' need for additional stock of buprenorphine. "This is particularly problematic given that individuals who are unable to...

### **Guidance released for tapering of opioids to prevent withdrawal in children**

A plan for tapering opioids should be developed to minimize withdrawal symptoms in children receiving opioids for five or more days, according to a clinical report from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published online Aug. 18 in *Pediatrics*. Adam C. Adler, M.D., from Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, and colleagues address screening for symptoms of iatrogenic opioid withdrawal as well as mechanisms for opioid withdrawal prevention. The authors note that the signs and symptoms associated with withdrawal in the pediatric population are relatively consistent, with the primary manifestation often...

### **Kratom faces increasing scrutiny from states and the feds**

For years, state lawmakers have taken the lead on regulating kratom—the controversial herbal supplement used for pain relief, anxiety and opioid withdrawal symptoms. Some states have banned it entirely. Others have passed laws requiring age limits, labeling and lab testing. At least half of the states and the District of Columbia have enacted some form of regulation on kratom or its components—building a patchwork of policies around a product largely unaddressed by the federal government. But that may soon change. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is pushing to ban 7-hydroxymitragynine, or 7-OH—a powerful...

### **Overdose dashboard brings real-time data to community**

As overdoses from fentanyl and opioids continue to rise, many communities have created interactive overdose dashboards that show demographic, geographic and time trends in suspected overdoses and community resources to help with substance abuse. But there's not much evidence to show that these dashboards effectively disseminate data and help public health officials make data-driven decisions, especially in rural areas. Researchers from the College of Veterinary Medicine have filled that gap. They collaborated with Cayuga County Mental Health in developing an overdose dashboard that enabled data-driven decision...

### **Exploring experiences of surveillance in prenatal women who use or who are in treatment for using drugs**

Using longitudinal qualitative methods, the study looked at the care pathways for women who are dependent on drugs perinatally. The paper focuses on women's experiences of care prenatally, and highlights their anxiety concerning social work referrals and the potential loss of their babies to the care system. Published in *The British Journal of Social Work*, the study's findings may have implications for how services engage with women who use drugs in the perinatal period and call for approaches that are responsive to the needs of women and those of their babies. Alongside King's College London, the study team comprised of researchers...

### **Harnessing VR to prevent substance use relapse**

Substance use recovery is a lifelong process, but environmental triggers, such as alcohol at social gatherings or pain medication advertisements, can put individuals in recovery at risk of relapse. Research by social work Professor Holly Matto, with colleagues from George Mason's College of Science, demonstrates how positive stimuli, called recovery cues, can counteract drug cravings and lower relapse risk. The study, "Examining the Power of Recovery Cues to Enhance Real-Time Regulation and Manage Substance Craving," was published in *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*. The team equipped individuals in...

### **Fund overdose prevention and other addiction efforts**

During Overdose Awareness Month, it's important to remember and honor those we've lost, reflect on the progress that we've made, and recommit to our efforts to save lives. While overdose deaths have decreased recently, last year, more than 80,000 people died from overdoses and over 48 million people had substance use disorder (SUD). Now is a time to double down on the efforts to address our overdose and addiction crises. In order to prevent a backslide on progress made, evidence-based prevention, harm reduction, and treatment programs need continued federal support. Congress, the branch of the federal...

### **With U.S. funding for science at risk, a longtime advocate sees 'light at the end of the tunnel'**

For most of Mary Woolley's career, science and politics have existed harmoniously. On only a few occasions have they become misaligned, said Woolley, who has served as president and CEO of the research advocacy group Research!America since 1990. Those occasions include a movement to slash the budget of the National Institutes of Health in the mid-1990s, a wave of skepticism of science during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Trump administration's current slashing of research funding. "In this particular Congress and this administration, there has been vilification of some parts of science," Woolley said. "Science meets politics..."

### **The Executive Order That Could Cripple Science**

I recently wrote about the slow dismantling of the U.S. medical and scientific infrastructure. And just two weeks later, I'm sad to report it is about to get worse. Much worse. On August 7, President Trump signed an executive order that could fundamentally restructure how federal research grants are awarded. On the surface, this change may sound like a small, bureaucratic procedural shift, but procedure is policy and, in this case, policy is politics. In fact, this order is a direct power grab that threatens to undo decades of scientific progress. How so? The order directs a move to take away final decision-making authority for federal...



## **A common sight at concerts, nitrous oxide abuse is soaring, prompting health concerns**

Every party needs balloons. These just happen to be filled with laughing gas. "We don't do it that often. It's funny for about 30 seconds," said a concertgoer outside Red Rocks Amphitheatre, who was preparing to inhale nitrous oxide from a balloon before The String Cheese Incident played there in mid-July. She requested anonymity for fear of job reprisal. "There's not really that much thought to it. It's a stupid drug. The dumbest out of them all." Perched in the bed of a silver pick-up with friends in Lower South Lot 1, the 20-something woman pinched the end of the pastel blue balloon as she brought it to her lips, then...

## **Funding Opportunities**



## **GRANTS & FUNDING**

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

There are no new NIH Grants Funding Opportunities to post this week.

### **Other Funding Opportunity:**

#### **UC-UC Health Addiction Center (UCAC) Pilot Research Program**

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Award Dates: March 1, 2026 – February 28, 2027

Read the story above in the UC/Regional section of the newsletter or review full details and submission guidelines on the attached PDF.

### **UC Foundation Funding Opportunity**

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or [russeccg@foundation.uc.edu](mailto:russeccg@foundation.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.

#### **Sloan Seeks Nominations for Research Fellowships in 7 Science Disciplines**

**Deadline: September 15, 2025**

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation seeks nominations of outstanding early career researchers for the Sloan Research Fellowships in the fields of chemistry, computer science, Earth system science, economics, mathematics, neuroscience, and physics. Successful candidates receive a \$75,000 fellowship awarded to the candidate's institution to be used over a two-year period for any activity supportive of the



fellow's research, including (but not limited to) equipment, technical assistance, summer salary support, professional travel, or trainee support.

Candidates for a Sloan Research Fellowship must:

- Hold a Ph.D. or equivalent degree in chemistry, computer science, economics, mathematics, neuroscience, earth system science, physics, or a related field;
- Be a member of the faculty of a college, university, or other degree-granting institution in the U.S. or Canada;
- Be tenure-track, though untenured, as of September 15, 2025;
- Hold a faculty position with a regular teaching obligation.

Candidates should have a record of independent research accomplishments that demonstrate creativity, initiative, and the potential to become leaders in the scientific community through their contributions to their field. The Foundation strongly encourages the nomination of qualified women, Black, Indigenous, and Latina/o/e candidates. Required documents include a confidential nomination letter, three confidential letters of support, a research statement, a curriculum vitae, and two journal articles. Potential candidates are advised to collect nomination materials well in advance of the deadline. The Sloan Research Fellowship Program recognizes and rewards outstanding early-career faculty who have the potential to revolutionize their fields of study.

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