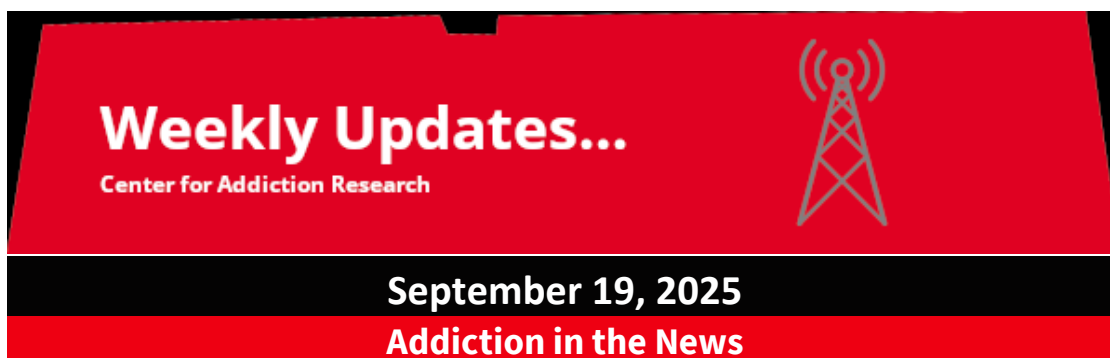


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu) 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 (required): September 22, 2025 – Final Notice!

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.

[Trials testing psychedelics for treating substance abuse disorders - Clinical Research News highlights addiction speaker series presentation](#)

Clinical Research News highlighted a presentation from the University of Cincinnati's Davide Amato and Jon Kostas, executive director of the Association for Prescription Psychedelics, discussing current trials testing psychedelics to treat substance use disorders. Amato and Kostas spoke at the Center for Addiction Research's Summer Speaker Series Aug. 13. Amato gave an overview of the history of psychedelics and research on their use to treat substance use disorder. He noted former names for the class of drugs such as "psychotomimetics" and "hallucinogens" can be misleading. "In the context of psychosis, altered perception is very different," said Amato, PhD, associate professor in UC's James L. Winkle College of... **(co-authors, Dr. Davide Amato, CAR Member, and Dr. T. John Winhusen, CAR Director, see publication below in the newsletter)**

[From Burnout to Compassion: Stories Over Stigma](#)

In 2017, residents of Hamilton County, Ohio, made over 4,000 overdose-related calls to 911. That year, 570 individuals lost their lives to drug overdose—the highest number ever recorded in Hamilton County, which is home to more than 800,000 Ohioans and the city of Cincinnati. Responding to such a staggering number of overdoses was overwhelming and soon led to another crisis: increased burnout among the county's first responders. This burnout was also associated with an increase in stigmatizing attitudes among first responders, which can deter people in crisis from making overdose-related 911 calls. People who use drugs may...

[How Portsmouth, Ohio, became the addiction 'recovery capital of the world'](#)

Portsmouth sits on the banks of the Ohio River, a gateway to West Virginia and Kentucky that was once a manufacturing hub but has since long faded. In the 2000s, the town earned widespread attention as an epicenter of the opioid crisis

that ravaged America. Today, Portsmouth, which anchors Scioto County, is the state's epicenter for opioid treatment — and many who live there aren't happy about it. That trajectory explains why recovery homes, a type of transitional housing for people receiving addiction treatment, are a top-of-mind issue for many local officials. In interviews, community leaders said that recovery homes...

Ohio bill seeks to regulate explosion of addiction recovery homes in the state

Ohio Rep. Justin Pizzulli, a Portsmouth Republican, introduced earlier this year a bill in Columbus to tighten regulations of recovery homes. Pizzulli's House Bill 58 would require all recovery homes to get a certificate of need — essentially a state license that's granted following a review to see if the housing is needed. This would be a change from the current system, through which private industry groups certify providers as following their standards. The bill also would set up a process for the state to grant these licenses and to review any appeals for rejected...

ODRC continues to fight the influx of drugs

As part of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's (ODRC) ongoing efforts to prevent drug abuse in its prisons, the agency announced that its new Ohio Mail Processing Center (OMPC) is now managing mail for all prisons statewide. ODRC began phasing in OMPC operations for all prisons in November 2023, with the final three prisons, Toledo Correctional Institution, the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, and the Ohio State Penitentiary, coming online last month. The OMPC, located in Youngstown, now serves as a centralized processing location for all incarcerated persons' non-legal mail. After reviewing mail for security concerns...

Study reveals unequal burden of the fentanyl epidemic across the United States

A new study illuminates how some areas of the country have been hit much harder than others by the fentanyl epidemic, which took more than 70,800 lives in 2022 alone. The research calls attention to a need for focused, coordinated efforts to prevent overdose deaths in the places where deaths from the opioid are rampant, said lead author Thomas Wickizer, a professor emeritus in The Ohio State University College of Public Health. The study appears in the journal *Health Affairs Scholar*. "There's no fentanyl epidemic in South Dakota or Wyoming or Nebraska. But...

DEA launches new campaign for college campuses in Ohio and Michigan

TOLEDO, Ohio (WTVG) - College students are settling into their new routines for fall, and the Drug Enforcement Administration is working hard to ensure those routines do not include what could be a fatal mistake. "Counterfeit pills are out there and our young people are especially susceptible," Brian McNeal, the public information officer for the DEA Detroit Division, said. McNeal said overdoses and drug poisonings are a public health crisis right now, and pills are a major contributor. "You know the university setting was a time for experimentation back in the day," McNeal said. "Well, unfortunately, experimentation with synthetic opioids...

DeWine wants to ban kratom, but what is the helpful, or harmful, herbal extract?

A ban on kratom could be finding its footing in the Buckeye State, but what is this herbal extract, and why does Gov. Mike DeWine want it out of Ohio? In August, DeWine asked the Ohio Board of Pharmacy to designate natural and synthetic forms of kratom as illegal drugs, calling kratom an "imminent public health risk" that's contributing to overdose deaths in the state. Advocates, however, tout it as a way to manage chronic pain and even as a safe alternative to opioids for those with substance use disorder. That ban is now on pause after a call from Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., though DeWine has said...

Kentucky doctor doubtful state medical board will relax restrictions on addiction medication

The effort to loosen regulations for an addiction medication in Kentucky has been delayed. The state Board of Medical Licensure has strict rules on when doctors can prescribe buprenorphine, a medication used to treat opioid addiction. Dr. Colleen Ryan, a psychiatrist and addiction medicine specialist working in Frankfort, was in the room when Kentucky lawmakers and the Medical Licensure Board decided to postpone a critical meeting originally scheduled for Sept. 9 to discuss potential updates to the current regulations. The move gave several national and state medical groups, including the Kentucky Society of Addiction Medicine, a...

Kentucky's fight against substance abuse

Few challenges have weighed more heavily on Kentucky families and communities than substance abuse. Addiction has touched every county, every community, every school district and countless homes across the Commonwealth. It tears apart families, burdens our health care and justice systems and cruelly steals both lives and livelihoods. However, there is hope. Each September, we mark National Recovery Month, which provides an opportunity to celebrate the courage of those who have fought their way back from addiction, the families who have stood beside them and the men and women who dedicate themselves to walking with...

Governor certifies six counties as Recovery Ready Communities

Gov. Andy Beshear certified six counties as Recovery Ready Communities Friday during the Team Kentucky Recovery Month celebration in Frankfort. By designating Boyd, Carter, Clay, Greenup, Letcher and Owsley counties as Recovery Ready, Team Kentucky is ensuring access to assistance for drug or alcohol addiction for the nearly 153,000 Kentuckians who reside in those parts of the commonwealth. The announcement brings the total counties designated as Recovery Ready Communities to 31, providing residents with access to addiction treatment and recovery support while removing barriers to the workforce. This represents...

Smoking status should influence lung cancer staging, new study shows

The University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center's Graham Warren, M.D., Ph.D., and international collaborators have led a groundbreaking study that could change the way lung cancer is diagnosed and treated. The research, published in the Journal of Thoracic Oncology on Sept. 8, found that patients' smoking status at the time of lung cancer diagnosis has such a profound impact on their survival that it should be considered when staging lung cancer. Cancer staging, which doctors determine at diagnosis, is based on factors including a tumor's size, location and whether it has spread in the body. Staging helps predict prognosis and plan...

National News

Analysis finds alcohol-induced deaths in the U.S. have nearly doubled from 1999 to 2024

In an analysis by race, sex, age, and geography, alcohol-induced death rates in 2024 are nearly double those in 1999, with a sharp increase at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although rates are higher for men, the largest increase in alcohol-induced deaths over the full 25-year period occurred in females aged 25–34, according to a study published by Dr. Tony Wong and colleagues at UCLA in PLOS Global Public Health. Alcohol-induced deaths have been increasing over the past two decades. Particularly concerning are increases between 2019 and 2021, when the population was under significant stress from isolation due...

Fathers' drinking plays role in fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, study shows

It's a well-known fact that fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) in children is caused by mothers who drink during pregnancy. But it turns out that the father's drinking habits could also affect a child's growth and development. A team of international researchers—including contributors from Stellenbosch University (SU)—found that a father's alcohol use may have a small but direct negative impact on a child's development by the age of seven. A father's drinking contributes to the harm caused by alcohol use during pregnancy. The findings of their study were published recently in the journal Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental...

Study finds key brain area drives alcohol-seeking to escape withdrawal stress

What compels someone to keep engaging in alcohol use, even if it damages their health, relationships and well-being? A new study from Scripps Research offers an important clue: a small midline brain region plays a key role in how animals learn to continue drinking to avoid the stress and misery of withdrawal. In a new study, published in Biological Psychiatry: Global Open Science on August 5, 2025, the Scripps Research team zeroed in on a set of brain cells in the paraventricular nucleus of the thalamus (PVT) in rats. They found that this region becomes more active, driving strong relapse behavior, when rats learn to associate...

Chronic alcohol use halts liver cell regeneration, new study finds

Excessive alcohol consumption can disrupt the liver's unique regenerative abilities by trapping cells in limbo between their functional and regenerative states, even after a patient stops drinking, researchers at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and collaborators at Duke University and the Chan Zuckerberg Biohub Chicago describe in a new study. This in-between state is a result of inflammation disrupting how RNA is spliced during the protein-making process, the researchers found, providing scientists with new treatment pathways to explore for the deadly disease. The researchers published their findings in the journal...

Frequent cannabis users show no driving impairment after two-day break

Scientists from the Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research (CMCR) at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine found that, in the largest such study to date, frequent cannabis users did not display impairments in driving performance after at least 48 hours of abstinence. The new findings have implications for public health as well as the enforcement of laws related to cannabis and driving. Approximately three-quarters of Americans live in a state where cannabis is legally available, and about 15% of Americans currently use cannabis. As cannabis usage becomes more widespread, understanding its effects on daily...

Automated smoking interventions offered to parents may curb their tobacco habits

Researchers from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and Mass General Brigham have found that integrating an automated smoking cessation intervention for parents into pediatric primary care demonstrated increased treatment received and reduced the number of cigarettes smoked. While additional interventions are needed to improve quit rates, the study indicates the benefits of pediatric primary care support in reducing parental smoking. The findings are published in JAMA Network Open. Prior studies have shown a variety of benefits for parents who quit smoking, including elimination of future tobacco-related...

Nicotine pouches may offer path to reduced tobacco harm

As lawmakers and public health experts debate the safety of nicotine pouches, researchers from Rutgers Health found that for now, most adults that use these products also have a history of tobacco use and may be choosing these products as a possible step toward reducing or quitting more dangerous forms of nicotine delivery. The findings—believed to be the first national estimates of daily nicotine pouch use in the U.S.—were published in JAMA Network Open. Faced with declining cigarette sales, tobacco manufacturers in the U.S. are turning to tobacco-free nicotine pouches, such as Velo and Zyn, which are among the...

Toward the development of e-cigarettes as smoking-cessation therapeutics

Since e-cigarette technology emerged over two decades ago, nicotine vaping has presented a conundrum for public health. Commercial vaping devices are

optimized to deliver nicotine in the most rewarding possible way, and by mixing it with flavors, it is possible to tailor its appeal to targeted consumers like youth, making transition from experimentation to escalation of use much more likely. There is evidence that initiation with vape products in adolescence can be a steppingstone to taking up smoking cigarettes and use of other drugs. On the other hand, there is growing evidence that vaping does not present the worst...

Exclusive: US FDA to fast-track nicotine pouch reviews amid White House pressure

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration plans to fast-track reviews of four tobacco firms' nicotine pouches in a pilot program launching on Monday, amid pressure from the Trump administration to speed up approvals, according to meeting transcripts seen by Reuters. The FDA aims to finish reviewing the pouches from Philip Morris International (PM.N), Altria (MO.N), Reynolds American - part of British American Tobacco (BATS.L), and Turning Point Brands (TPB.N), by December, according to one transcript of an agency meeting held on Friday. Tobacco companies have previously had to wait years for their products to be...

RFK Jr.'s MAHA report on children's health leaves something out: nicotine

Frances Daniels, a Baltimore mother of three, read the Trump administration's 20-page report called "Make Our Children Healthy Again," and noticed some notable words were missing from it: "Smoking" and "nicotine." The word "tobacco" is mentioned once in the document, in a reference to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. "I was horrified," Daniels says. "It never once mentioned substance usage. Specifically: nicotine." U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. presented a strategy report of the Make America Healthy Again Commission intended to tackle childhood chronic disease. That was of...

Smoking or vaping may increase risk of diabetes

People who use e-cigarettes, cigarettes or both face an increased risk for developing diabetes, according to University of Georgia research published in AJPM Focus. Smokers were significantly more likely to be diagnosed with prediabetes and diabetes than nonsmokers, the study found. "In an era when e-cigarettes are marketed as a 'safer' alternative to smoking, this suggests they may carry a hidden peril and may be quietly contributing to long-term health problems like prediabetes and diabetes," said Sulakshan Neupane, lead author of the study and a doctoral student in the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental...

HHS Makes Push to Stop Youth Vaping

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Surgeon General today announced its Youth Vaping Resource Guide [PDF, 7.94 MB] to combat the ongoing youth vaping epidemic. Despite recent declines in use, e-cigarettes remain the most commonly used tobacco product among middle and high school students, with more than 1.6 million youth reporting current use in

2024. Up to 85% of e-cigarette devices and pods sold in U.S. retail outlets are illegal products. Federal enforcement efforts have seized millions of unauthorized devices, but illegal sales persist, threatening the health of young people...

HHS, CBP Seize \$86.5 Million Worth of Illegal E-Cigarettes in Largest-Ever Operation

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) today announced the seizure of 4.7 million units of unauthorized e-cigarette products with an estimated retail value of \$86.5 million – the largest-ever seizure of this kind. The seizures were part of a joint federal operation in Chicago to examine incoming shipments and prevent illegal e-cigarettes from entering the country. Almost all the illegal shipments uncovered by the operation originated in China. FDA and CBP personnel determined that many of these shipments contained...

Treating opioid addiction in jails improves treatment engagement, reduces overdose deaths and reincarceration

A study supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) finds that individuals who received medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) while incarcerated were significantly more likely to continue treatment six months after release than those who did not receive MOUD. The study also found that receiving MOUD in jail was associated with a 52% lower risk of fatal opioid overdose, a 24% lower risk of non-fatal opioid overdose, a 56% lower risk of death from any cause, and a 12% lower risk of reincarceration after release. These outcomes underscore the importance of providing MOUD treatment during incarceration. Published...

Buprenorphine linked to lower preterm birth and lifetime costs for mothers and infants with opioid use disorder

Over the last 20 years, substance use-related deaths have more than doubled for women of reproductive age. Overdose deaths are now a leading cause of maternal mortality in the U.S., and in some states, the leading cause. Still, substantial gaps remain in understanding how different treatment approaches influence the short- and long-term health of mothers and infants, as well as their broader economic impacts over time. Research published recently in the journal JAMA Pediatrics has found that while established medications for opioid use disorder in mothers—buprenorphine and methadone—are both superior and cost...

How primary care clinics can help curb the opioid epidemic

The U.S. is in the midst of an opioid epidemic; overdose deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl have increased more than 100-fold since 1999. Medications like buprenorphine, methadone and naltrexone can all help treat opioid use disorder (OUD), curbing relapse, overdoses and death. But many barriers exist to people with OUD getting these medications, from providers not receiving adequate training to people with OUD feeling too stigmatized to find a specialist. "All these

little things can be major barriers when you're in the throes of withdrawal or addiction," explains psychologist Erin Kelly, Ph.D.. Along with a team led...

FDA Issues New Guidance to Expand Non-Opioid Options for Chronic Pain, Curb Misuse

Despite recent declines, opioids remain commonly prescribed to about 1 in 5 U.S. adults who live with chronic pain as effective alternatives are limited. As part of its broader strategy to address the opioid crisis, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration today issued draft guidance titled "Development of Non-Opioid Analgesics for Chronic Pain" to accelerate safe and effective non-opioid treatments and to reduce prescription-related opioid misuse. The new draft guidance emphasizes efficient drug development approaches, with specific attention to trial design, appropriate patient populations, and meaningful outcomes- such as...

Are patients undergoing surgery for early-stage cancer at risk of persistent opioid use?

New research indicates that many patients who undergo surgery with the intent to cure early-stage cancer continue or start opioid prescriptions in the year following surgery. The findings are published in Cancer. Pain management is essential during cancer care, but prescription opioid practices associated with cancer treatment may lead to unsafe long-term opioid use and adverse outcomes such as opioid use disorder and opioid overdose. To assess the situation, investigators examined rates of new persistent opioid use in the year following surgery for stage 0 to 3 cancers among 9,213 U.S. veterans who were opioid-naïve...

Substance use during pregnancy can harm a fetus, experts warn

Using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other substances during pregnancy can harm the developing fetus, even when the risks are not always obvious, a West Virginia University psychiatrist warns. "Many substances can harm a fetus, including substances many falsely perceive to be harmless, like marijuana," said Dr. Aliana Abascal of the Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry at WVU School of Medicine. "Nicotine, not just in the form of cigarettes, but also vaping nicotine, can impact fetal development," she added in a news release. "So can alcohol, methamphetamines and heroin." Abascal shared the warning...

Harm-reduction vending machines offer free naloxone, pregnancy tests and hygiene kits

In the lobby of the YMCA in Reading, Pennsylvania, stands a row of vending machines—but one machine is different from the rest. Instead of stocking chips or soda, this vending machine has drug-testing strips, hygiene kits, socks, soap, wound care supplies and naloxone, a medication also known by its brand name Narcan that is used to reverse opioid overdoses—all completely free. The Health To Go vending machine has been in the Reading YMCA for over a year. Another one is in

Harrisburg, outside of the UPMC Harrisburg Emergency Department. The machines list the names of resources such as mental...

A forgotten opioid has resurfaced as a lethal street drug

Nitazenes—a class of highly potent synthetic opioids—are rapidly emerging as a major contributor to the overdose crisis, according to a Pain Medicine review published today by authors from Vanderbilt University Medical Center and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Originally developed in the 1950s but never approved for clinical use, these substances are over 20 times more potent than fentanyl and hundreds to thousands of times more potent than morphine. They can come in liquid, pills or powder form, and have been found in substances sold via social media and on the illicit drug market since 2019. Created...

An animal sedative keeps turning up in opioid deaths—what you need to know about medetomidine

A dangerous new drug adulterant is spreading through America's illicit opioid supply, and it's making overdoses significantly harder to reverse. Medetomidine, a veterinary sedative normally used to sedate pets, is increasingly being mixed with heroin and fentanyl, creating a cocktail that experts warn could be far deadlier than previous street drug combinations. Known as "flysky" on the streets, this animal tranquilizer has already been linked to at least two overdose deaths in Pennsylvania and represents a troubling evolution in the continuing opioid crisis. Unlike traditional opioid overdoses, those involving medetomidine can't...

Veteran recovery programs show 41% death risk reduction through incentive system

The chance to win a few dollars every time they pass a drug test, and the possibility of bigger prizes the longer they stay off drugs like methamphetamine and cocaine, may be enough to keep veterans from dying as they navigate early recovery, a new study suggests. In all, veterans had a 41% lower risk of dying when they received a type of care called contingency management (CM) through the Veterans Administration as part of their recovery from stimulant use disorder, compared with a closely matched group of veterans who didn't get CM care. Contingency management uses cash or gift certificate prizes as incentives for...

In adolescent lab animals exposed to cocaine, high-intensity interval training boosts aversion to the drug

People with substance use disorder who participate in recovery running programs have shown improved success in maintaining their sobriety and reducing their risk for relapse. These observations led Panayotis Thanos, a University at Buffalo neuroscientist who studies the brain's reward system, to try to figure out the brain mechanisms behind that phenomenon. In a new study published today in PLOS One, Thanos, Ph.D., senior research scientist in the Clinical and Research Institute

on Addictions in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at UB, and co-authors reveal that high-intensity interval...

Drugged driving is quietly becoming one of the most dangerous road hazards

In October 2023, an unthinkable tragedy unfolded in Coleman, Wisconsin: An 8-month-old girl lost her life when a driver, impaired by cannabis, ran a stop sign and crashed into another vehicle. In February 2025, the driver pleaded guilty to negligent vehicular homicide and drugged driving with a minor passenger—and now faces up to 10 years behind bars. These preventable circumstances highlight a stark reality: Drugged driving can be just as deadly as alcohol-impaired driving. Meanwhile, driving under the influence of drugs is becoming increasingly common across the United States. Yet public awareness and policy...

House advances \$108B HHS funding bill

The House Appropriations Committee voted to advance a bill that would provide \$108 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) budget in FY 2026, a 6% or \$7 billion cut from FY 2025. But: That cut falls well below the \$31.3 billion cut that the Trump administration proposed in May. The details: Mental health and addiction: The bill would increase funding for the mental health and substance use block grants, but, in line with Trump's budget proposal, it would consolidate funding for STIs, infectious diseases including tuberculosis, and the opioid epidemic. The bill would defund the Interagency...

PEPFAR Commits to Distributing Breakthrough HIV Drug Lenacapavir Demonstrating American Excellence in Science and American Leadership in HIV Prevention

The U.S. government is making a pre-market commitment to purchase the drug lenacapavir from Gilead Sciences, an American Company. Lenacapavir is a new, extremely effective HIV prevention injection that only has to be taken twice a year. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) will distribute lenacapavir in 8-12 high-burden HIV countries in 2026. With lenacapavir, PEPFAR is seeking to meaningfully reduce the number of new HIV infections, especially in pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Lenacapavir has been proven to be: Effective: In a large-scale clinical trial more than 99% of people on lenacapavir...

Tool focused on understanding why young people buy video game loot boxes could help pinpoint gaming-related issues

The first tool designed to understand why young video gamers purchase loot boxes—digital items in games that offer random rewards after purchase—could potentially help identify early signs of gaming-related harms, researchers have said. Recent estimates have suggested that 89% of children and young people are now playing video games, and the gaming industry is projected to be worth \$321 billion by 2026. Such increases have prompted NHS England to raise concerns about loot

boxes exposing children and young people to gambling-like experiences, and some countries have already introduced regulations. As such, the...

Trump administration cannot proceed with overhaul of US health agencies, court rules

Sept 17 (Reuters) - A federal appeals court on Wednesday refused for now to allow U.S. President Donald Trump's administration to proceed with a planned overhaul of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which would involve reorganizing several agencies and firing thousands of employees. A three-judge panel of the Boston-based 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals declined to lift, opens new tab a federal judge's injunction secured by several Democratic-led states. They had challenged a plan U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr announced in March to carry out a large-scale reorganization of the...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

PAR-25-446

Development of Interventions to Prevent and Treat Substance Use Disorders and Overdose (UG3/UH3 - Clinical Trial Optional)

RFA-AT-25-004

NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience: Coordination Center for Interoception Research (BPCCIR) (U24, Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

RFA-DA-27-004

BRAIN Initiative: Theories, Models and Methods for Analysis of Complex Data from the Brain (R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

Other Funding Opportunities:

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

Deadlines:

Letter of Intent Due (required): September 22, 2025 – Final Notice!

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

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

Alkermes Pathways Research Awards program

Application Deadline: December 15, 2025 (by 11:59 PM Eastern Time)

Open to early-career investigators committed to advancing research in schizophrenia and bipolar I disorder, including sleep and circadian disturbances within these conditions. The annual Alkermes Pathways Research Awards® program provides an individual grant amount of up to \$100,000 per project.

UC Foundation Funding Opportunities

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or russeccg@foundation.uc.edu at **least 5 business days before the deadline**, prior to applying to the below opportunities, to ensure coordination and to facilitate assistance with approaches.

10 Distinguished Investigator Mental Health Research Grants to Be Awarded

Deadline: Thursday, September 25, 2025, by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time

Brain & Behavior Research Foundation (BBRF), formerly known as the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), invites applications for its 2026 NARSAD Distinguished Investigator Grant. The award is to support established scientists who maintain peer-reviewed, competitively funded research programs in mental health. The Distinguished Investigator Grant provides up to \$100,000 in funding for a one-year period, with extensions considered on a case-by-case basis. The purpose of the grant is to advance innovative neuroscience and psychiatry research to develop improved treatments, cures, and preventive strategies for mental illnesses. Disorders of interest include addiction, ADHD, anxiety, autism, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, depression, eating disorders, OCD, PTSD, schizophrenia, and suicide prevention. Trans-diagnostic designs that investigate multiple disorders simultaneously are encouraged. Eligible applicants must hold the rank of full professor or equivalent and demonstrate an independently funded, peer-reviewed scientific program. For complete details please visit the BBRF website.

Responsible Gaming Center Supports Studies of College-Age Sports Betting

Deadline: October 13, 2025

The International Center for Responsible Gaming (ICRG) is funding research on gambling behaviors and problems among college-aged individuals, students, and athletes. Through this RFA, ICRG invites eligible investigators and institutions to apply for funding to conduct research focused on gambling behaviors and problems among college-age individuals, students, and athletes. This research aims to investigate the prevalence, risk factors, and impacts of gambling in these groups, with a special emphasis on online sports betting behaviors and their consequences. Applicants may request up to \$360,000 in direct costs and up to 25 percent in facilities and administration (indirect) costs. The maximum total budget is \$450,000. This funding pool is flexible, allowing applicants to apply for projects of one, two, or three years in duration. The ICRG has issued a request for applications for:

Prevalence of sports betting among college-aged individuals, students, and athletes: Understanding the frequency of gambling behaviors, with a comparison between college athletes, students, and the broader college aged population. Risk factors for problem gambling: Identifying and analyzing key risk factors such as exposure to sports betting culture, financial incentives, and social influences on gambling behaviors among college-age individuals, students, and athletes. Impact of gambling on athletic and performance: Investigating how gambling affects college athletes' training, competition, academic performance, and overall well-being. Influence of team practices on gambling participation: Understanding the role of team practices, as well as other initiatives, in shaping attitudes toward gambling among athletes. Development of educational and prevention strategies: Designing data-driven recommendations aimed at preventing gambling harm and supporting healthy behaviors among college-age individuals, students, and athletes. Domestic or international, public or private, nonprofit or for-profit organizations are eligible to apply. The principal investigator (PI) must have a PhD, MD, or other comparable terminal degree. Investigators who are not active PIs or co-PIs or co-Is on existing ICRG grants may apply. The mission of the ICRG is to help individuals and families affected by gambling disorder and to prevent the onset of gambling problems through high quality scientific research and evidence-based educational programming on gambling disorder and responsible gambling.

CAR Member New Publications

Psychedelics as pharmacotherapeutics for substance use disorders: A scoping review on clinical trials and perspectives on underlying neurobiology

Lucas Wittenkeller, Gary Gudelsky, T. John Winhusen, Davide Amato

British Journal of Pharmacology

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ABSTRACT

Psychedelics have garnered great attention in recent years as treatments for major depressive disorder (MDD) and treatment-resistant depression because of their ability to alter consciousness and afflicted cognitive processes with lasting effects. We aimed to characterise how psychedelics are currently being investigated to treat substance use disorders (SUDs). Additionally, we aimed to summarise the available literature on the dopaminergic consequences of classic psychedelics in the nucleus accumbens (NAc), a foundational component of SUDs, to understand how psychedelics may be therapeutically relevant for SUDs from a neurobiological perspective. Two scoping review approaches adhering to PRISMA-SCR guidelines were conducted. The first screened for ongoing clinical trials utilising psychedelics for SUD treatment registered at ClinicalTrials.gov. The second screened for in vivo microdialysis studies measuring psychedelic-induced changes in extracellular NAc dopamine in rats, found using PubMed, SCOPUS or Google Scholar. Thirty-four unique clinical trials were identified targeting alcohol, cannabis, cocaine,

methamphetamine, nicotine, and opioid use disorders and mostly consisting of open-label trials lacking placebo-treated controls. The most common SUD investigated was alcohol use disorder (AUD). Following stringent exclusion criteria, four publications were identified that measured extracellular dopamine in the NAc following systemic administration of psilocybin or 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA). A sustained mild increase of dopamine was observed that was unique to high-dose psilocybin. In addition to known therapeutic mechanisms of psychedelics, findings herein suggest that psilocybin may support dopamine homeostasis through restoration of tonic dopamine levels.

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