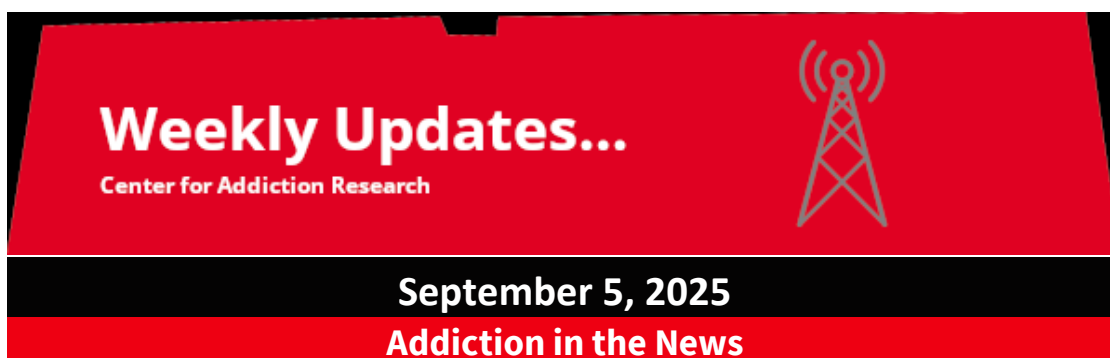


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)) to change your communication preferences. **Please note that the next weekly newsletter will be published Friday, September 19.** 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 – Quickly Approaching!**

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.

### **Ohio residents among dozens indicted in international drug trafficking scheme**

CINCINNATI — The FBI Director and U.S. Attorney are in Cincinnati Wednesday, announcing indictments in connection with an international drug conspiracy impacting the region. FBI Director Kash Patel, U.S. Attorney Dominick Gerace, DEA Acting Special Agent in Charge Andy Lawton and FBI Cincinnati Special Agent in Charge Elena Iatarola announced indictments against nearly 30 people, including two from Ohio, accused of helping facilitate the shipment of illegal drugs and "cutting agents" into the United States. "This operation has already seized enough fentanyl powder to kill 70 million Americans and enough fentanyl pills to kill another 270,000," Patel said. "This indictment sends a clear message: We will...

### **Coroner's art gallery gives hope of addiction recovery**

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Addiction is a brain disorder, but unlike other diseases, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states stigma can prevent people living with the chronic condition from seeking the care they need. To help raise awareness of the life-changing treatment options available, September is recognized as "National Recovery Month." "Highlighting these, these individual stories, who are dealing with the disease of addiction and they've gotten out of it, or at least they're in treatment and they're in recovery," Franklin County Coroner Dr. Nathaniel Overmire said. The Franklin County Forensic Science Center is also helping draw attention to resources available to anyone impacted by substance...

### **Ohio overdose survivor credits Narcan for helping him start his journey to recovery**

TIFFIN, Ohio — A northwest Ohio man who nearly lost his life to heroin overdoses is now sharing his journey of recovery in hopes of inspiring others battling addiction.

Dylan Churella, caught in the grip of alcohol and heroin abuse, overdosed three times over a decade before turning his life around. He credits the overdose-reversal drug Narcan with giving him the second chances he needed. "Several times I've overdosed in Narcan. I was Narcan'd. And thank God for Narcan, because it saved my life and gave me the opportunity to start recovering," said Churella. Churella's addiction began while studying at Ohio State University, where he used alcohol to fit in socially. That drinking escalated into drug use and...

### **Kentuckians push to deregulate medication doctors say could reduce opioid-related deaths by 50%**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The call is growing louder for a Kentucky state agency to reverse course and make one medication for opioid addiction easier to access. Kentucky has the 7th-worst overdose death rate in the U.S., according to data from the Kaiser Family Foundation, it is a nonprofit that focuses on health policy research. Kentuckians in recovery, doctors and lawmakers tell WHAS11 one outdated state drug policy will risk even more lives. Buprenorphine, better known by brand names such as Suboxone or Subutex, is taken to treat opioid use disorder. It is designed to help with severe withdrawal symptoms, yet advocates say its use is highly restrictive in Kentucky, frustrating physicians like Dr. Michelle Lofwall...

### **Kentucky Republican proposes studying psychedelic drug ibogaine to curb addiction**

A Kentucky lawmaker wants to revisit a previously abandoned idea for the state to fund research of an illegal psychedelic drug for its potential to treat drug addiction. Calling addiction a "scourge" in Kentucky, Nicholasville Republican state Sen. Donald Douglas told the Interim Joint Committee on Health Services on Aug. 27 in Frankfort, "we can't—and we shouldn't—continue in this same cycle." Douglas, who is also a doctor, said an alternative to medication-assisted treatment drugs like Suboxone, a low-grade opioid prescribed to treat opioid use disorder, is needed. "We've been dealing with the same clinical model for decades," Douglas said. "It ain't working, folks." Douglas proposed investing state...

## **National News**

### **Autumn increases substance abuse risk for young people, according to survey**

The start of the fall semester and college football season can also kick off rising substance use and the harms that come with it for many young people. However, addiction specialists at the University of Mississippi have several recommendations to help control alcohol and drug use and avoid problems down the road. "Society normalizes partying, drinking, using drugs as part of the college experience," said Alysia Lajune, program manager for the William Magee Center for Alcohol and Other Drugs and Wellness Education. "It's part of the boxes we feel we need to check when we go to college." A spring 2025 survey conducted by the university's...

### **Study finds prenatal cannabis exposure delays reproductive development in female offspring**

Cannabis use by mothers during pregnancy and while nursing may disrupt and slow the reproductive development of their daughters and even granddaughters, a new Washington State University study suggests. The research, published in the journal *Toxicological Sciences*, found female mice exposed to cannabis while pregnant and nursing gave birth to smaller offspring that experienced delayed puberty and irregular reproductive cycles. The strongest effects appeared in the first generation, with signs diminishing in later generations. "Our study was specifically designed to gain a better understanding of the long-term...

### **Many pregnant women uncertain of marijuana risks even as use increases**

Many pregnant women are unsure if it's safe to use marijuana or products containing cannabidiol, an active compound in marijuana, even as they increasingly turn to them to combat morning sickness, anxiety or insomnia, a recent University of Florida Health study shows. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists advises against the use of marijuana and cannabidiol, or CBD, during pregnancy. Marijuana use has been associated in some studies with adverse fetal neurodevelopmental outcomes. Evidence of cannabidiol safety is sparse in human studies, but researchers remain concerned that it might...

### **Delta-8 THC use highest where marijuana is illegal, study finds**

Researchers from University of California San Diego have found that Delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol (delta-8 THC), a psychoactive compound often sold as a legal alternative to marijuana, is most commonly used in states where marijuana use remains illegal and delta-8 THC sales are unregulated. The findings, published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, highlight how gaps in cannabis policy may be inadvertently steering people toward less-regulated substances and have allowed manufacturers to evade restrictions placed on marijuana products. The study's authors categorized each state...

### **FDA Urges Nicotine Pouch Manufacturers To Use Child-Resistant Packaging Following Increasing Reports of Accidental Exposure**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration calls on nicotine pouch manufacturers to use child-resistant packaging to protect American children from accidental, harmful exposure. From April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025, the number of reported nicotine pouch exposure cases reported to U.S. Poison Centers steadily increased. Approximately 72% of nicotine pouch exposure cases occurred in children under 5 years of age. Nicotine pouches contain concentrated nicotine that can be harmful or potentially fatal to young children, even in small amounts. Toxic effects in young children have been reported with nicotine doses as low...

### **Study shows how smoking drives pancreatic cancer**

A new study explains why smokers have a higher chance of developing pancreatic cancer and why they tend to have worse outcomes than nonsmokers. Researchers from the University of Michigan Health Rogel Cancer Center found a specific cell that responds to environmental toxins such as those found in cigarettes. When the toxins bind to the cells, it leads to the release of a protein, interleukin-22, causing tumors to grow aggressively in mice with pancreatic cancer. Digging deeper led the team to identify a super-suppressive type of immune cell that fuels this response while also stopping the immune system from...

### **Dad's childhood passive smoking may confer lifelong poor lung health onto his kids**

A father's exposure to passive smoking as a child may impair the lifelong lung function of his children, putting them at risk of COPD—a risk that is heightened further if they are childhood passive smokers themselves—finds research published online in the respiratory journal *Thorax*. The findings highlight the intergenerational harms of smoking, say the researchers, who urge fathers to intercept this harmful legacy by avoiding smoking around their children. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, more usually known by its acronym of COPD, includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Now the third leading cause of...

### **State bans on flavored e-cigarettes could inadvertently increase traditional cigarette use among young adults**

A study in *Health Economics* reveals that comprehensive state bans on flavored e-cigarettes may reduce vaping among young adults, but they can also lead to increased use of traditional cigarettes. Using information from national datasets and advanced statistical methods, researchers found evidence that young adults 18–24 years of age decrease their use of e-cigarettes by about 2–3 percentage points after state bans, while increasing traditional cigarette use by a similar amount. Because cigarettes are more dangerous to health than e-cigarettes, there appears to be a net negative effect on health for this age group. For...

### **Despite relaxed prescribing rules, opioid addiction treatment still hard to find at pharmacies**

Faced with a worsening drug crisis, policymakers in recent years have made it much easier for doctors to prescribe the highly effective opioid addiction treatment buprenorphine. However, many patients may still struggle to find pharmacies carrying the treatment, finds new research led by the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics. Buprenorphine was available at just 39% of U.S. retail pharmacies in 2023, a modest increase from 33% in 2017, according to the study published in *Health Affairs*. But disparities in who can access the treatment have persisted. Pharmacies in predominantly Black neighborhoods (18%) and...

### **Medicaid is crucial to access treatment for opioid addiction, researchers find**

Medicaid plays a key role for giving people with opioid-use disorder access to treatment, according to a Rutgers Health study. Progress in life-saving treatment for opioid-use disorder with the medication has stalled in the past several years. While some states were able to achieve substantial improvement, others lost ground. Specifically, states that have expanded access to Medicaid insurance coverage since 2018 saw increases in prescriptions for opioid-use disorder treatment, according to the study, while states that haven't expanded Medicaid experienced declining treatment rates after 2022. Researchers found that state...

### **Exploring the promise of human iPSC-heart cells in understanding fentanyl abuse**

In recent years, fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine, has been a main contributor to the opioid crisis. One of the worst adverse effects of fentanyl abuse is opioid-induced cardiac arrest. Although it is well known that opioid abuse can induce arrhythmias, the effects of fentanyl abuse on heart rhythms have not yet been thoroughly investigated. In a recent study published in *Circulation*, first-author Gema Mondéjar-Parreño, Ph.D. and senior author Joseph C. Wu, MD, Ph.D., director of Stanford Cardiovascular Institute, found that human-induced pluripotent stem cells provide...

### **Study reveals how a popular fentanyl additive affects breathing and heart rate**

While the grip of the opioid epidemic is loosening, thanks in part to extensive public health efforts and rescue medications like Narcan, deaths from accidental overdose still threaten those who use synthetic opioids like fentanyl. The drug is increasingly mixed with other potent substances, including animal tranquilizers such as xylazine, making it even more dangerous. States across the country, including Michigan, are seeing a drastic increase in xylazine-involved fatalities, according to a report from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. However, very little is known about how the sedative, which is not...

### **Private Equity Acquisition of Opioid Programs No Help for Methadone Supply**

Private equity acquisition of opioid treatment programs did not appear to increase the methadone supply, according to a difference-in-differences study. While opioid treatment programs acquired by private equity firms had a "consistent differential increase" in methadone shipments (159.9 g per program, or 13.3%) during the 2 years post-acquisition relative to matched controls ( $P=0.007$ ), the pooled increase was not significantly different from the pre-acquisition trend ( $P=0.214$ ), reported Yashaswini Singh, PhD, of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and co-authors. Furthermore, in private...

### **California program successfully scales emergency department addiction treatment statewide**

A comprehensive study shows that California's CA Bridge program has successfully implemented opioid-use disorder treatment services across more than 80% of the state's emergency departments, reaching over 165,000 patients and providing nearly 45,000 instances of buprenorphine treatment from July 2022 through December 2023 alone. The initiative proves that emergency departments can serve as a critical entry point for addiction care when provided with proper funding, training, and patient navigation support. The study is published in the journal *Health Affairs*. The opioid crisis continues to devastate...

### **Close link between street sweeps, overdose and systemic harm: Study**

Confiscating personal belongings during government-led dismantling of tent cities in Vancouver inflicts immediate harm and further destabilizes people already struggling to meet their basic needs, according to a new study from Simon Fraser University. Published in the journal *Public Health*, the study found nearly one in four people experiencing homelessness reported having their personal belongings confiscated by city workers between 2021 and 2023. These confiscations—often part of street sweeps to remove tent cities—were significantly associated with non-fatal overdoses, violent victimization, and barriers to...

### **Balancing kratom's potential benefits and risks—new legislation in Colorado seeks to minimize harm**

David Bregger had never heard of kratom before his son, Daniel, 33, died in Denver in 2021 from using what he thought was a natural and safe remedy for anxiety. By his father's account, Daniel didn't know that the herbal product could kill him. The product listed no ingredients or safe-dosing information on the label. And it had no warning that it should not be combined with other sedating drugs, such as the over-the-counter antihistamine diphenhydramine, which is the active ingredient in Benadryl and other sleep aids. As the fourth anniversary of Daniel's death approaches, a recently enacted Colorado law aims...

### **Weight-loss drug semaglutide shown to reduce cocaine use in rats**

Scientists have found that the diabetes/weight loss drug semaglutide, sold commercially under brand names like Ozempic and Wegovy, significantly reduces cocaine-seeking behavior in rats. This work needs to be confirmed in humans, but it suggests that semaglutide is a candidate to be developed as a treatment for cocaine dependency; at the moment there is no effective pharmacological treatment for cocaine dependency. The work is published in the *European Neuropsychopharmacology*. Cocaine is the second most popular illegal drug used in Europe. The European Drug Agency reports that around 2.7 million young...



### **Report finds 59% of overdose deaths involved stimulants in 2021 to 2024**

From 2021 to 2024, 59.0% of overdose deaths involved stimulants, according to research published in the Aug. 28 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Lauren J. Tanz, Sc.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used CDC State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System data to describe the characteristics of stimulant-involved overdose deaths during January 2021 to June 2024. The researchers found that during January 2021 to June 2024, 59.0% of overdose deaths involved stimulants: 43.1% and 15.9% co-involved stimulants and opioids and involved...

### **Webinar: Characterizing Collegiate Recovery Programs: Findings from a Mixed Methods Study**

September 24, 2025, 11am-12:30pm PT (2pm-3:30pm ET)

Sponsored by the CTN Western States Node and the Northwest and Pacific Southwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center Networks (ATTCs)

This presentation from Noel Vest, PhD, Assistant Professor at Boston University School of Public Health, will explore findings from a mixed-methods national study examining the structure, implementation, and impact of Collegiate Recovery Programs (CRPs) in the U.S. and Canada. Participants will learn about CRP funding models, mutual-help group (MHG) integration, and student recovery pathways, including key demographic trends and service utilization patterns. Drawing on both survey and qualitative data, the presentation will highlight barriers and facilitators to program success, with practical recommendations for expanding culturally competent and sustainable recovery support on college campuses. 1.5 CME / CE credits available

### **Pentagon to Begin Screening for 'Magic Mushroom' Use**

U.S. service members may be drug-tested for suspected use of “magic mushrooms” under a new policy announced by the Pentagon last week. A memo issued Aug. 18 by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness said that, starting Oct. 1, troops may be screened for psilocin, the hallucinogen in psilocybin mushrooms. Psilocybe cubensis, aka “magic mushrooms” or “shrooms,” have been used as a recreational psychedelic drug for decades in the U.S. but remain a Schedule I substance under federal law, meaning they have been classified as having a high potential for abuse, have no official accepted use...

### **Binge gaming in kids associated with adverse mental, social and academic outcomes**

A team of Hong Kong researchers has found that binge gaming correlates with poorer social, academic, and mental health outcomes in schoolchildren, with distinct patterns by gender. Internet gaming occupies a central place in much of youth culture, with prior work documenting recognition of internet gaming disorder (IGD) in DSM-5 as a condition for further study and as a formal diagnosis in ICD-11. East Asia has a high IGD prevalence, and surveys in Hong Kong identify



adolescents as a key affected group, particularly boys. Evidence has linked prolonged play with depressive symptoms, anxiety, and sleep problems. In the...

## 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:

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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.

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