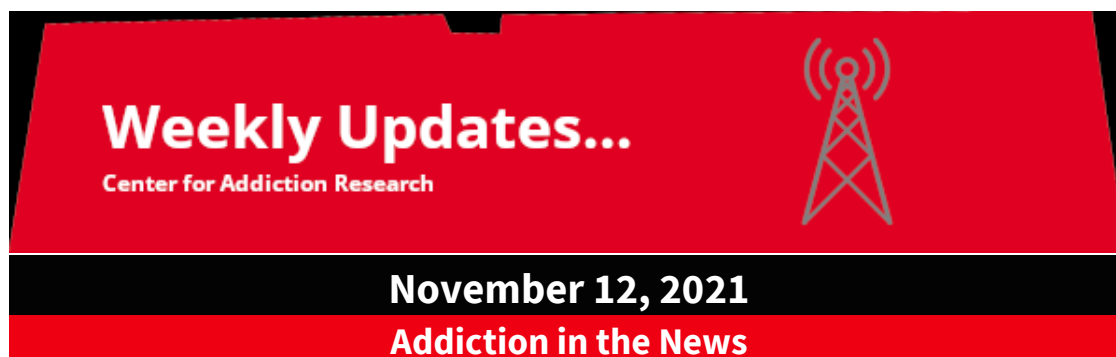


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu))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

#### **HEALing Communities Study Offering Narcan, Training To Kentucky Counties Through \$87M NIH Grant.**

[WTVQ-TV](#) Lexington, KY (11/8, McQueen, 11K) reports, "The University of Kentucky HEALing Communities Study Initiative is taking the life-saving drug Narcan to the streets through an \$87 million grant awarded from the National Institutes of Health." Among the counties involved in the initiative are "Boyd, Boyle, Clark, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Kenton, and Madison," and "in Winchester, UK and the Clark County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy (ASAP) have partnered together to get out into the community and educate people on how to use Narcan."

#### **There's just no excuse for losing a whole generation of people': Mothers, first responders stress dangers of deadly opioid epidemic in Northeast Ohio**

CLEVELAND — The opioid epidemic is rocking the nation and Cuyahoga County's Medical Examiner is sounding the public safety alarm after least a dozen died from drug overdoses in just 48 hours. "I never, ever would've thought that I would've been here, like, two years ago talking about my son overdosing," Rosemary Pratt said. In May of 2020, on Memorial Day weekend, Ricky Pratt, 28, was getting ready to set off on a camping trip. "The next day, my husband went there..."

## **Governor DeWine Announces OneOhio Recovery Foundation Board Appointments**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today announced his five appointments to the OneOhio Recovery Foundation board and his two appointments to the Foundation’s expert panel. The Foundation will soon be established to distribute a portion of the settlement funds from the drug manufacturers and distributors of opioids to communities in Ohio. “Establishing the OneOhio Recovery Foundation is the next step in enhancing Ohio’s prevention, treatment, and recovery...

## **National News**

### **Some Veterans Reportedly Self-Medicating With Cannabis Use, Frustrated With VA For Not Recognizing Potential Benefits.**

[Politico](#) (11/8, Fertig, 6.73M) reports, “Millions of veterans are self-medicating their war-caused ailments with marijuana, and they are frustrated the VA continues to dismiss the drug’s possible benefits.” National Institute on Drug Abuse authorities “have testified to Congress that there is ‘substantial evidence’ that cannabis has medicinal value for treating chronic pain, and have urged Congress repeatedly to increase research into a myriad of potential positive and adverse effects of cannabis use.” The article adds, “The VA did not respond to POLITICO’s request for comment for this story. It testified before the House VA Committee in October that it is studying synthetic CBD as a treatment for PTSD, when used alongside psychotherapy. The agency also has approved a study on the efficacy of synthetic THC and CBD for neuropathic pain that will begin in 2022.”

### **NIDA, UI Researchers Find Association Between Cannabis Use, Impaired Driving Abilities.**

The [Daily Iowan \(IA\)](#) (11/7, Neri, 59K) reports, “Individuals who use cannabis before driving show impaired driving abilities and memory encoding,” according to National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and University of Iowa (UI) researchers who “used cognitive tasks and a simulated driving test on their subjects to find brain signatures that correlate to impaired driving ability.” Researchers found that “cannabis users are slow to react to roadway situations like changing stop lights or moving pedestrians.”

### **Teenagers Who Vape Marijuana At Higher Risk Of Serious Side Effects Than Those Who Smoke Marijuana, Study Says.**

[International Business Times](#) (11/7, 123K) reports, “Teenagers who vape marijuana are at greater risk of experiencing more serious side effects than those who smoke it, according to” researchers who also “found that teens in their senior year of high school were most likely to be vaping marijuana compared to younger adolescents.” The [research](#) was published in JAMA Pediatrics. The article adds, “According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the average amount of THC in marijuana seized by

law enforcement was less than 4% in the 1990s but more than 15% by 2018. The NIDA also warned that some marijuana strains sold by state dispensaries can be even higher with some products containing as much as 80% THC.”

### **68% Of Adults – A Record High – Support Legalizing Marijuana.**

[Forbes](#) (11/4, Dellatto, 10.33M) reports a record-high 68% of US adults support legalizing marijuana, according to an October Gallup survey of over 800 adults released Thursday. Forbes adds, “Major political parties are still divided over the issue: While 84% of Democrats and 71% of Independents support legalization, only 50% of Republicans do, according to the Gallup report.” The National Institute on Drug Abuse is mentioned.

### **Researchers Report Finding 21-Year-Old Minimum Tobacco Purchasing Age Correlated To Lower Incidence Of Youth Smoking.**

[KTOE-AM](#) Mankato, MN (11/4) reports that in a study released this week by the University of Minnesota, researchers “found a correlation between raising the tobacco buying age to 21 and a decrease in youth smoking.” Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota April Wilhelm, who worked on the study, explained, “8th and 9th graders in Minnesota living in communities with these policies in place, they were much less likely to report use of several of the tobacco products, compared to those in communities without the tobacco 21 policies.”

### **Fentanyl Use Increased Amid Pandemic, Substance Abuse Specialist Says.**

[WUFT-FM](#) Gainesville, FL (11/9, Sepe, 1K) reports that the use of fentanyl – which is the US’ leading cause of overdose deaths, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) – increased amid the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Gainesville substance abuse specialist Burton Burt. According to “NIDA, fentanyl is seen as a cheap alternative to drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin and is easy for dealers to slip it into their products to increase their profits. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) says drug trafficking organizations infuse fentanyl into products and sell it in kilograms. For a substantially lower price, people can experience a high 50 times more potent than they would have experienced with a drug like morphine.”

### **Survey: Patients Prefer Opioids Following Surgery Despite Addiction Potential.**

[UPI](#) (11/9, Dunleavy) reports that 60% of US adults “want stronger pain medications after surgical procedures, even if they may be addictive, such as opioids, but are willing to try other options if they’re effective,” according to results from an Orlando Health survey. However, post-surgical opioid use “has come under increased scrutiny in recent years due to the risk for addiction. Opioid-based pain medications prescribed by physicians have helped fuel an epidemic of abuse and misuse of these drugs, which have intoxicating effects similar to illegal drugs, such as heroin, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse.”

### **WPost Praises Becerra's Plan To Combat Drug Addiction, Overdoses.**

The [Washington Post](#) (11/9, 10.52M), in an editorial on the record high of drug overdoses from March 2020 to March 2021, writes, "Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra has rolled out a four-part plan that includes measures to prevent drug addiction by cracking down on inappropriate prescribing of opioids and to curb drug overdoses by emphasizing harm reduction techniques" including "clean syringes and test strips to check street drugs for hidden fentanyl." According to the Post, "Becerra initially suggested his agency might be open to the creation of overdose prevention sites," but "later walked back the comment," which it says is "unfortunate" commenting that "they should not be ruled out as a possible tool." The Post concludes that "it is encouraging that the opioid crisis...is getting attention that hopefully will result in meaningful action."

### **Eastern Washington Residents Have Limited Access To Methadone-Based Opioid Treatment Programs.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (11/8, Dreher, 187K) reports individuals hoping "to begin treatment in Eastern Washington for opioid addiction using methadone" face "limited" options, with "just four programs that offer methadone to treat addiction east of the Cascades, including two sites in Spokane, one in Yakima and one in Richland," according to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration." In addition, "a recent Washington State University study found that loosening of the restrictions for patients to take medicine home during the COVID-19 pandemic did not lead to more overdoses." The article adds that methadone is one of two drugs "approved for evidence-based ways to treat opioid addiction and allow a person to participate in normal life, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse."

### **NIDA Grant To Fund Mid-Stage Trial Of IXT-m200 In Countering Methamphetamine Effects.**

The [Paragould \(AR\) Daily Press](#) (11/5) reported a "\$13.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)" will fund a planned phase 2 clinical trial of drug IXT-m200 which appears "to counter the effects of methamphetamine." The drug "could be the first monoclonal antibody treatment for methamphetamine use disorder and overdose." The article added, "The funding follows a 2020 NIH/NIDA grant of \$8.1 million to study the same drug as a treatment for methamphetamine overdose."

### **Some Healthcare Providers Have Social Bias About Which Patients Should Be Given PrEP, Study Says.**

[Open Access Government \(UK\)](#) (11/9) reports "healthcare providers still have some social bias about who should be given PrEP," according to researchers who "surveyed 370 primary and HIV care providers to understand whether a patient's

race, sexual orientation and injection drug use affected clinical judgment.” The findings were published in AIDS and Behavior. The article adds that prior research “highlights how race and poverty are factors that make it difficult to stop HIV. ... The epidemic unfolds quietly and devastatingly, alongside the opioid epidemic.” National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Nora D Volkow said, “Scientific advances have transformed the course of HIV in individuals. To transform the course of the epidemic, we need to expand care and prevention strategically to those who need it most.”

### **Opinion: Psychedelics Drawing Increased Attention From Researchers.**

“Product developer, supplement maker and cannabis industry veteran” Robert Johnson writes for [Rolling Stone](#) (11/9, 12.39M), “Psychedelics are having a moment, and that’s great news for research, access and education.” The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), for example, has issued a grant to Johns Hopkins School of Medicine psychedelic researcher Dr. Matthew Johnson “to study psilocybin as a treatment for tobacco addiction.” Johnson adds, “Particularly because psychedelics have potential with difficult-to-treat psychological issues, from addiction and alcoholism to treatment-resistant depression and PTSD, medical models, clinical trials and FDA approval could boost the legitimacy of psychedelics as therapy. But others argue these agency approvals and regulations could actually withhold plant medicines from those without resources.”

### **Study Suggests MDMA May Improve Outcomes Among Individuals With Severe PTSD.**

[TODAY](#) (11/5, Carroll, 2.24M) reported that 67% of individuals with severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) who received MDMA “no longer qualified for a diagnosis of PTSD two months after the treatment,” according to findings published in [Nature Medicine](#). Those findings may “help get PTSD therapy with MDMA approved by the Food and Drug Administration.” TODAY added, “According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, MDMA is also in clinical trials as a possible treatment aid for anxiety in terminally ill patients and for social anxiety in autistic adults. The FDA recently classified MDMA-assisted psychotherapy for PTSD as a ‘breakthrough therapy.’” [\[Article attached.\]](#)

### **AMA Past President Reports HHS Secretary Becerra Reluctant To Make Telemedicine Provisions Permanent.**

[Healio](#) (11/7, Viguers, 40K) reports, “The COVID-19 pandemic has been a ‘catalyst’ for innovations in allergy care” according to AMA past president Susan R. Bailey, MD, FAAAAI. Among the innovations she identified are pulse oximeters, and telemedicine. Bailey added that when meeting with HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra, she encountered “a surprising amount of reluctance to make telemedicine provisions and payment permanent because of a concern about the potential for fraud and abuse.” Bailey said, “It’s imperative that we continue to study the usage

patterns and cost effectiveness of telemedicine as the pandemic progresses so that we have hard data to demonstrate the value of continuing this important modality beyond the formal public health emergency.”

### **Ketamine Shows Promise As Mental Health Treatment, But Some Scientists And Physicians Worry Drug Is Not Ready For Widespread Use.**

The [New York Times](#) (11/4, Dodge, 20.6M) reports, “Ketamine – an anesthetic first popular with the 1970s counterculture movement and then as a club drug known as ‘Special K’ – has recently emerged as a promising mental health treatment.”

According to the Times, “In early trials, patients suffering from a wide range of drug-resistant mood disorders – including major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and social anxiety disorder – have seen symptoms improve, often immediately.” However, “some scientists and doctors worry the drug is not yet ready for widespread use.”

### **Detroit Voters Vote To Approve Measure Decriminalizing Psychedelic Mushrooms.**

[CBS News](#) (11/4, O'Kane, 5.39M) reports [Detroit voters on Election Day Tuesday](#) voted to approve Proposal E, which decriminalizes “therapeutic mushrooms – also known as psychedelic or ‘magic’ mushrooms.” The measure makes “the personal possession and therapeutic use of entheogenic plants by adults the city’s lowest law-enforcement priority.”

## **Funding Opportunities**



[NOT-OD-22-017](#)

[Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for Tobacco Centers of Regulatory Science \(TCORS\) for Research Relevant to the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act \(U54 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[NOT-OD-22-011](#)

[Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for Center for Coordination of Analysis, Science, Enhancement, and Logistics \(CASEL\) in Tobacco Regulatory Science \(U54 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

