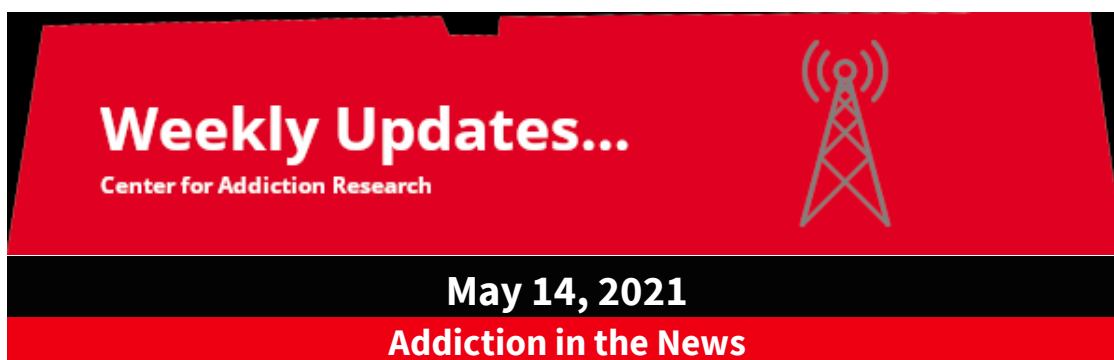


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)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

Indiana County May Close Syringe Exchange Program Opened In Response To 2015 HIV Outbreak.

STAT (5/6, Facher, 262K) reports that in 2015, Indiana's Scott County opened a syringe exchange program, in response to an HIV outbreak that drew national attention, but now the county "may soon close the syringe exchange program widely credited with helping to end its outbreak." Public health advocates who pushed for the program are warning that shutting it down "could lead to a new wave of HIV and hepatitis C cases and increased drug overdoses." Additionally, there is concern its closure could lead to similar programs being shut down elsewhere.

JCPS Sues McKinsey Over Alleged Role In Fueling Opioid Epidemic

The Jefferson County Board of Education is suing the marketing and business consulting firm McKinsey & Company over its alleged role in fueling the opioid epidemic. In a lawsuit filed Wednesday in federal court, the school board alleges McKinsey is responsible for the millions of dollars in costs Kentucky school districts are spending to handle the epidemic's impact on students, families, and employees. According to the lawsuit, Jefferson County Public Schools is seeking damages for costs related to providing special education and related services to children who were exposed to opioids in...

National News

Cannabis Use Disorder In Pregnancy Tied To Worse Infant Outcomes.

[HealthDay](#) (5/6, 11K) reports, “Prenatal cannabis use disorder (CUD) is associated with higher odds of major adverse neonatal outcomes, according to a [study](#) published online April 22 in *Addiction*.” Yuyan Shi, “from University of California, San Diego, and colleagues used mother-infant linked hospital discharge records, as well as birth and death certificates to examine associations between prenatal CUD and adverse neonatal outcomes.” The analysis “included 4.83 million mothers who delivered a live singleton birth during 2001 to 2012 and their paired infants.” Nora D. Volkow, “M.D., director of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse, said in a statement: ‘These data reinforce the case for caution around using cannabis during pregnancy.’”

Idaho Health Department, Project Filter Partner To Offer Mothers One Year’s Worth Of Diapers, Wipes If They Quit Tobacco.

[KMVT-TV](#) Twin Falls, ID (5/7) reported, “The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare announced Friday it will be offering mothers a chance to receive up to a year’s worth of free diapers and wipes to quit using tobacco.” IDHW “is working with Project Filter on the quit tobacco campaign.” A campaign spokesperson said, “This Mother’s Day, the Department of Health and Welfare and Project Filter are urging mothers to change their family’s life forever and quit smoking, vaping, and chewing for good!”

Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths Among Black Men In Massachusetts Soared By Almost 70% In 2020, Officials Say.

The [AP](#) (5/12) reports, “While there was a slight increase in the overall number of confirmed and suspected opioid-related drug overdose deaths in Massachusetts in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic, overdose deaths among Black men soared by almost 70%, state health officials said Wednesday.” The article adds, “Among Black non-Hispanic males, the confirmed opioid-related overdose death rate increased 69%, from 32.6 to 55.1 per 100,000 people, the highest increase of any ethnic or racial group in 2020.”

Long Lasting Medications May Improve Treatment Satisfaction in People with Opioid Use Disorder

A commentary from leaders at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the NIH, discusses a new study showing that an extended-release injection of buprenorphine, a medication used to treat opioid use disorder, was preferred by patients compared to immediate-release buprenorphine, which must be taken orally every day. Extended-release formulations of medications used to treat opioid use disorder may be a valuable tool to address the current opioid addiction crisis and reduce its associated mortality. The study and the accompanying commentary

were published May 10, 2021 in *JAMA Network Open*. (NIH News Release - **Long-lasting medications may improve treatment satisfaction in people with opioid use disorder, Article attached.**)

Drug Overdose Deaths Surge During Pandemic.

The AP (5/8, Landers) reported that according to the CDC, “at least 87,000 people died of a drug overdose in America” in the 12-month period ending last September, “an increase of 27% from the previous 12 months and a record for the most such deaths in a single year.” In that same period, “deaths attributed to synthetic opioids, mainly fentanyl, increased 53% nationwide.”

Washington State’s 2020 Drug Overdoses Reached Highest Levels In At Least A Decade.

The AP (5/10) reported preliminary data from the Washington State Department of Health found that more people died from drug overdoses in the state in 2020 “than any other year in at least the last decade.” According to the AP, “the health department reported 1,649 drug over dose deaths [in 2020], compared with 1,259 the previous year,” an increase of more than 30%. Deadly opioid overdoses increased even more, up nearly 40% from 2019. Troy Seibert, the opioid use disorder manager for the Washington Recovery Help Line, said, “Any time we see folks in a state of despair, substance use is going to rise. ... COVID has certainly had a huge impact on the increased rise in substance use overall.”

The Hill (5/10, Schnell, 5.69M) reports Kristen Maki, a spokesperson for the state Department of Health, said, “It is reasonable to believe the psychological, social and economic impacts of COVID-19 led to an increase in drug use.” State officials expect the numbers to worsen as more preliminary data is analyzed.

Adulterants In Street Drugs Tied To Increased COVID Risk.

Medscape (5/12, Subscription Publication, 219K) reports, “The composition of street drugs like heroin and cocaine are changing.” According to a new analysis, “almost all contain at least one toxic adulterant, and many contain a plethora. Most adulterants have pharmacologic activities and toxicities.” The findings “of adulterants and their consequences are concerning, according to Jean Lud Cadet, MD, who was asked to comment on the findings.” Cadet, “who is a senior investigator and chief of the Molecular Neuropsychiatry Research Branch at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, said: ‘The blood dysplasia, the pulmonary problems that some of those adulterants can cause – it’s actually terrifying, to put it bluntly.’” Dr. Mark S. Gold, a coauthor of the review, said, “The clinical message would be that our [substance use] patients will contract infectious disease and need to be prioritized for [COVID-19] vaccination.”

MDMA Has Promise For Treating PTSD In Conjunction With Therapy, Study Suggests.

[Scientific American](#) (5/12, 3.1M) reports, “A long-awaited study is making worldwide headlines for finding that the outlawed psychoactive drug MDMA is startlingly effective in treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).” However, “researchers and study participants say the substance itself, while extremely powerful, catalyzes healing rather than working on its own.” The “treatment also requires dozens of hours of therapy – before, during and after the drug experience – with professionals whose special training is expensive and intense.” Researchers hope the new study “will help this treatment gain regulators’ approval for clinical use within a couple of years.” The [findings](#) were published this week in *Nature Medicine*.

Trial Shows Potential For MDMA In Treating PTSD, Reportedly Leading To Potential FDA Approval By 2023.

[CNBC](#) (5/10, Rosenbaum, 7.34M) reports, “New results from a clinical trial using MDMA” combined with talk therapy “to treat post-traumatic stress disorder showed the promise of a stigmatized drug to treat mental illness at a time when Covid-19 has raised global awareness of the toll of mental health conditions.” The study’s results “are expected to be published in *Nature Medicine* on Monday and FDA approval could come by 2023, according to a *New York Times*” [article](#) (5/9, A1, Jacobs, 20.6M). Meanwhile, “Companies like Compass Pathways, which uses psilocybin for depression, and Atai Life Sciences, backed by Peter Thiel, are researching a variety of ways to treat mental health with alternative and psychedelic therapies.”

Strategies For The Physical-Behavioral Healthcare Integration Puzzle.

[HealthPayerIntelligence](#) (5/10, Waddill) says, according to a National Institute on Drug Abuse report, approximately 25% of “individuals who have a serious mental illness also have a substance use disorder.” However, the National Institute on Drug Abuse report found that “only 18 percent of substance use disorder treatment programs and 9 percent of mental health treatment organizations offer treatment for patients who have been diagnosed both with a substance use disorder and a mental health illness.” Fortunately, “The Affordable Care Act and the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (or ‘Parity Act’) have improved patient access to coverage for both mental health treatment and substance use disorder treatment, the National Institute on Drug Abuse’s report noted.”

Psychedelics Now On Cusp Of Entering Mainstream Psychiatry.

The [New York Times](#) (5/9, A1, Jacobs, 20.6M) reports on its front page, “After decades of demonization and criminalization, psychedelic drugs are on the cusp of entering mainstream psychiatry,” having “profound implications for a field that in recent decades has seen few pharmacological advancements for the treatment of

mental disorders and addiction.” Researchers, however, “are mindful about potential missteps that could undo the progress of recent years.” The question “for many is how far – and how fast – the pendulum should swing.” Even those investigators “who champion psychedelic-assisted therapy say the drive to commercialize the drugs combined with a growing movement to liberalize existing prohibitions could prove risky, especially for those with severe psychiatric disorders, and derail the field’s slow, methodical return to” acceptance in the mainstream.

Wisconsin Native American Tribal Leader Says COVID-19 Pandemic Has Increased Drug Abuse.

The AP (5/12) reports, “Native Americans in Wisconsin are struggling to overcome increased drug abuse related to the COVID-19 pandemic,” a tribal leader said in the annual State of the Tribes address.” Lac du Flambeau President John Johnson Sr. “said Gov. Tony Evers’ budget proposal for a regional mental health center in northern Wisconsin is ‘a crucial building block and a foundation of dismantling the scourge of drugs,’ Wisconsin Public Radio reported.”

Addiction Policy Forum:

CDC Updates List of Health Conditions that Can Increase the Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19 to include Substance Use Disorders

Health officials have released an update that individuals with substance use disorders (SUD) are at a heightened risk for serious complications from COVID-19, and underscored the importance for individuals with SUD and their caregivers to get vaccinated.

Skipping vaccines in general is more risky if you have chronic health conditions like heart disease and respiratory illnesses, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which can make it harder to fight off infection and make complications more severe. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently updated the list of at-risk underlying health conditions for COVID-19 to include substance use disorders. “Having a substance use disorder (such as alcohol, opioid, or cocaine use disorder) can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19,” according to the CDC.

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[NOT-AA-21-030](#)

[Notice of Change to Eligibility Information for RFA-AA-20-013 "Integrative Neuroscience Initiative on Alcoholism \(INIA\) Consortia \(U01 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[NOT-DA-21-051](#)

[Notice of Change to the Eligibility Information for RFA-DA-22-001, "Mobile Health Solutions to rectify digital inequality in communities affected by drug addiction \(R43/R44 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-DA-21-049](#)

[Notice of Information: Establishment of a Standard THC Unit to be used in Research](#)

[PAR-21-168](#)

[Summer Research Education Experience Program \(R25 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[PA-21-205](#)

[Development and Testing of Novel Interventions to improve HIV Prevention, Treatment, and Program Implementation for People Who Use Drugs \(R34 Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PA-21-180](#)

[Pilot Health Services and Economic Research on the Treatment of Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use Disorders \(R34 - Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[NOT-AA-21-031](#)

[Notice of NIAAA's participation in NOT-NS-21-049, "Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): NIH Research Project Grant \(R01\) Applications from Individuals from Diverse Backgrounds, Including Under-Represented Minorities"](#)

[NOT-DA-21-053](#)

[Notice of NIDA's participation in NOT-NS-21-049, "Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): NIH Research Project Grant \(R01\) Applications from Individuals from Diverse Backgrounds, Including Under-Represented Minorities"](#)

