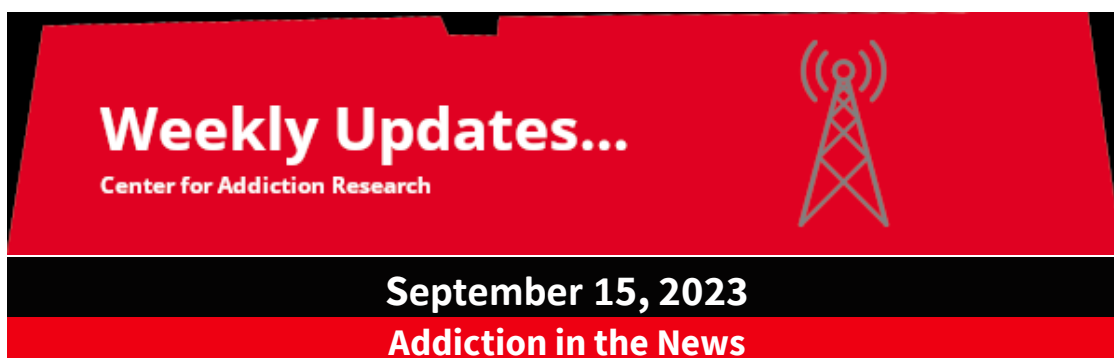


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)) to change your communication preferences. **Please note that the next weekly newsletter will be published Friday, September 29.** 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**

#### **Over-the-Counter Narcan Becomes Available as Overdoses Soar in Ohio**

Drug overdoses are popping up more frequently in Ohio, and bad-batch drugs are again to blame. The SOAR Initiative (SOAR stands for Safety, Outreach, Autonomy, Respect) alerts subscribers via text or app about deadly batches of drugs, often laced with unknown amounts of fentanyl. On Sept. 8, after a string of near daily alerts about hot spots for bad-batch drugs around the state, SOAR posted a rare message on Instagram alerting the public that overdoses are up across the board. "Ohio is currently experiencing high rates of overdoses and deadly batches," the post reads. "We want all of our communities to be safe, so please test your drugs, take extra caution when using, and don't...

#### **Pharmacies' appeal of \$650 million opioid judgment heads to Ohio top court**

Sept 12 (Reuters) - A federal appeals court weighing whether to uphold a \$650 million judgment against pharmacy operators CVS (CVS.N), Walmart (WMT.N) and Walgreens (WBA.O) for fueling the opioid epidemic in parts of Ohio has asked the state's highest court to weigh in first. The Cincinnati-based 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday said that the pharmacies' appeal of the judgment won by two Ohio counties raised "novel and unresolved questions" of whether state law permits the public-nuisance claim the case was centered on. The 6th Circuit canceled the Oct. 20 oral arguments that had been set in the case. U.S. Circuit Judge Richard Griffin cited a lack of "controlling precedent from...

## **How Ky's investment in studying an African plant could reshape opioid treatment | Opinion**

Kentucky is grappling with an escalating opioid epidemic, reflecting a nationwide trend. The already high death rates linked to opioids are exacerbated by the prevalence of fentanyl and compounded by limited treatment options. Notably, Kentucky ranks fourth in the nation for per capita overdose fatalities, with a staggering rate of 55.6 per 100,000 individuals (CDC data). Remarkably, about 80% of those addicted to opiates began with a legal prescription. The epidemic indiscriminately impacts all communities, irrespective of age, race, or location, leaving behind a trail of devastated families and communities. Currently, the primary treatments are medically assisted treatment (MAT), like suboxone...

## **Sports betting raises concerns for addiction**

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – A new and exciting source of entertainment could bode harmful for some. It's legal to bet on sports now in the Commonwealth, which will generate over 20 million dollars for the state but it could be bad news for some who struggle with addiction or have more addictive personalities. News 40 spoke to two therapists from Fuller Life Counseling about the troubles of addiction and how this could affect some Kentuckians. Emily Kline and Lacie Martinez said "concurrency" is a problem that many addicts run into, where one addiction can lead to another. Gambling could be a budding addiction for some now that betting on sporting events is more accessible. Martinez...

## **Good Question: Will the state government monitor increases in gambling addiction after sports betting legalization?**

EXINGTON, Ky. (WKYT) - For today's Good Question, Richard asks, "Now that betting on sports is legal, will there be any state government agency monitoring increases in addictions to gambling and the economic impact for families?" We don't know of a specific program monitoring the possible increase in gambling addiction, but they are likely coming. Part of the new law says that 2.5% of the revenue from sports betting will go to the Kentucky Problem Gambling Assistance Account. The Division of Behavioral Health will oversee how that money is used. Those funds are supposed to provide support to organizations and persons that "provide education, assistance, and counseling to..."

## **National News**

### **Less Afib in Heavy Drinkers Who Quit Alcohol Cold Turkey**

Chronic heavy drinkers in middle age had better chances of dodging atrial fibrillation (Afib or AF) if they quit alcohol instead of drinking less of it, a retrospective study suggested. In a nationwide population-based cohort from South Korea, former heavy drinkers who switched to absolute abstinence had a significantly lower long-term risk of new-onset Afib compared with peers who sustained heavy drinking (HR 0.379, 95% CI 0.169-0.853), reported Dae-In Lee, MD, of

Korea University Medical Center in Seoul, and colleagues. No such risk reduction generally applied to people who practiced harm reduction, or...

### **Study finds high rates of depression and anxiety in people who use both tobacco and cannabis**

People who use both tobacco and cannabis are more likely to report anxiety and depression than those who used tobacco only or those who used neither substance, according to a new study published this week in the open-access journal PLOS ONE by Nhung Nguyen of the University of California, San Francisco, U.S., and colleagues. Tobacco and cannabis are among the most commonly used substances worldwide, and their co-use has been on the rise amid the expanding legalization of cannabis. In the new study, the researchers analyzed data on the substance use and mental health of 53,843 U.S. adults...

### **Genetic evidence shows that smoking can cause us to age faster**

A study of nearly 500,000 people has shown that smoking shortens the end fragments of chromosomes in the white blood cells of our immune systems. The length of these end fragments, called telomeres, is an indicator of how quickly we age and our cells' ability to repair and regenerate. In her presentation to the European Respiratory Society International Congress in Milan, Italy, Dr. Siyu Dai, who is an assistant professor in the School of Clinical Medicine, Hangzhou Normal University, and also an honorary postdoctoral researcher in the department of pediatrics, The Chinese University of Hong Kong...

### **How e-cigarette or nicotine replacement therapy influences smoking cessation later in pregnancy**

The risks of smoking during pregnancy for both maternal and fetal health are well documented, but only about half of pregnant people quit smoking on their own. To learn more about how e-cigarette or nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) influences smoking cessation later in pregnancy, University at Buffalo researchers compared abstinence rates in the two groups. They found that those using e-cigarettes before pregnancy were more likely to abstain from smoking later in pregnancy. Published in JAMA Network Open on Sept. 12, the research was conducted as an observational study of data...

### **Nicotine e-cigarettes, prescription drugs and dual NRT identified as most effective stop-smoking aids**

Nicotine e-cigarettes and two prescription medications that curb symptoms of withdrawal are the most effective stop-smoking aids, according to a comprehensive, multinational review by a team of scientists, including a University of Massachusetts Amherst public health and health policy researcher. Dual forms of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), such as combining a patch with gum or a lozenge, were found to be nearly as effective. Smoking remains the leading cause of

preventable disease and death worldwide, and many people who want to quit smoking find it very difficult, due to the...

### **Young people who vape more likely to report chronic stress**

Young people who have used e-cigarettes are more than twice as likely to report experiencing chronic stress, according to research presented at the European Respiratory Society International Congress in Milan, Italy. The study was presented by Dr. Teresa To, a senior scientist at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto, Canada. She said, "Research is starting to show how vaping affects young people's physical and mental health. For example, our previous research has shown that those who vape are more likely to suffer an asthma attack. In this study we were particularly interested in the..."

### **Analyzing the new US plan to target xylazine-laced fentanyl**

The lethal mixture of xylazine and fentanyl, also known as Tranq dope, may sound unfamiliar to many, but its impact is harming people who use drugs nationwide. Xylazine, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for veterinary use as a sedative, has become a major component in the illicit drug trade. When consumed by humans, xylazine causes sedation, leading to profound health risks ranging from difficulty breathing to dangerously low blood pressure and even death, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics (LDI) senior fellow...

### **US drug overdose deaths more than quadrupled from 1999 to 2020, study finds**

The United States is experiencing its highest overall death rates in more than a century, fueled in part by drug overdose mortality. The origins of the current epidemic are due, at least in part, to a 1986 World Health Organization pronouncement that pain treatment is a universal right. As such, cancer pain treatment guidelines were developed, which included the provision of opioids. In 1995, OxyContin was approved for the management of pain, paving the way for widespread prescription of opioids. Researchers from Florida Atlantic University's Schmidt College of Medicine and collaborators...

### **Finding the balance: Opioids and pain control after surgery**

In a recent Mayo Clinic study published in the Annals of Surgery, researchers found that most patients prescribed fewer opioids after surgery were able to maintain satisfactory comfort levels without requiring more prescription refills later. Under new evidence-based guidelines, patients undergoing various surgeries received fewer opioid pills, and 88% reported feeling "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with their pain management. Researchers worked with the Mayo Clinic Survey Research Center to survey patients undergoing a range of elective surgeries. The survey investigated their post-surgery experiences...

### **With naloxone now more available, HHS officials tout its use**

During the same week that naloxone—a nasal spray that reverses opioid overdoses—became available for purchase without a prescription, the nation's top substance use officials called for greater availability and training for the drug, with five federal officials receiving training to administer it during a public demonstration at Health and Human Services headquarters Friday. The five were HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra; Deputy Secretary Andrea Palm; Rahul Gupta, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy; Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, HHS assistant secretary for mental health and substance...

### **Kroger to pay \$1.2 billion in opioid settlement with states, cities**

Kroger Co. announced it has agreed to pay \$1.2 billion to states and local governments and \$36 million to Native American tribes to settle claims the retailer's pharmacies helped fuel the opioid crisis by filling painkiller prescriptions. The Cincinnati-based retailer said it would make payments in equal installments over the next 11 years with the first payments in December. The announcement follows opioid litigation settlements announced by other major retailers such as CVS, Walgreens and Walmart. In a news release, Kroger said the settlement "is not an admission of wrongdoing or liability " and...

### **As more children die from fentanyl, some prosecutors are charging their parents with murder**

SANTA ROSA, Calif. (AP) — Madison Bernard climbed into bed before dawn with her toddler, Charlotte, who was asleep next to a nightstand strewn with straws, burned tinfoil and a white powder. Hours later, the mother woke and found her daughter struggling to breathe, according to investigators who described the scene in court documents. After being rushed in an ambulance to a hospital, the 15-month-old girl died from a fentanyl overdose. Her mother and father, whom authorities said brought the drugs into their California home, were charged with murder and are awaiting trial. The couple has pleaded not...

### **How should clinicians prescribe opioids for cancer-related pain in patients who use cocaine or methamphetamines?**

Clinicians treating cancer-related pain must consider whether and how to prescribe opioids to patients who use non-medical stimulants such as cocaine and methamphetamines; however, no guidelines exist related to these common and challenging situations. In a new study, palliative care and addiction experts deemed it appropriate to continue opioids, increase monitoring, and avoid opioid tapering in such patients. The results, "Expert consensus-based guidance on approaches to opioid management in individuals with advanced cancer-related pain and non-medical stimulant use," are...

### **Fatal ODs Involving Fentanyl Plus Coke, Meth Rose 50-Fold Over a Decade**

THURSDAY, Sept. 14, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- The "fourth wave" of the U.S. overdose crisis involves the use of illicit fentanyl mixed with stimulants such as cocaine or methamphetamine, and it's killing people in droves. The proportion of U.S. overdose deaths involving both fentanyl and stimulants jumped by more than 50-fold since 2010, from 0.6% in 2010 to more than 32% in 2021, a new study shows. "Fatal overdose involving both fentanyl and stimulants is on the rise," said study author Chelsea Shover, an assistant professor-in-residence at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine in Los...

### **Researchers identify genes associated with addiction to psychostimulant drugs**

Psychostimulant drugs like methamphetamine (METH) and cocaine (COC) affect the brain and nervous system by boosting alertness, attention, and energy levels of the individual. However, their persistent use results in drug addiction, compromising the life of the individual and burdening the health care, social, and legal systems as a consequence. In order to develop effective prevention and treatment strategies for drug addiction, it is critical to explore how these drugs interact with the nervous system and understand the mechanism underlying the addictive responses of individuals towards...

### **Intellectual disability more common in families with substance use disorder**

Children of a parent with alcohol or drug use disorder have a greater risk of intellectual disability, even if the problem only lies with the father, researchers from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden report. According to the study, which is published in the journal *eClinicalMedicine*, preventive measures should be directed at both parents. It is well known that a woman's alcohol consumption during pregnancy can increase the risk of her child developing an intellectual disability. Research from Karolinska Institutet now shows that all forms of substance abuse, both in the mother and the father, and not only...

### **DEA Gets an Earful About Telehealth Prescribing of Controlled Substances**

Should the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) require a prior in-person visit before allowing clinicians to prescribe controlled substances via telemedicine? That was one of the issues that DEA officials heard conflicting testimony on during a "listening session" Tuesday. "Arbitrary one-time in-person evaluation requirements do not prevent abuse and diversion," said Helen Hughes, MD, medical director of the Office of Telemedicine at Johns Hopkins Medicine, in Baltimore. "Telemedicine controlled substance prescribing happens in a variety of settings across Johns Hopkins Medicine, often without a previous...

### **Ozempic, Wegovy enter trials for treating addiction, dementia**

Researchers in the U.S. and U.K. are testing Type 2 diabetes drug Ozempic and weight loss therapy Wegovy for their potential in diminishing dementia and addiction, CNBC reported Sept. 7. Ozempic and Wegovy are glucagon-like peptide

receptor agonists made by Novo Nordisk, and they've been in high demand for about a year after free celebrity endorsements and TikTok trends for weight loss. In August, Wegovy scored two wins in phase 3 studies for cardiovascular indications, and early research is pointing to addiction and dementia. Past research has indicated GLP-1s can reduce amyloid and tau on...

### **Despite successes, addiction treatment programs for families struggle to stay open**

Two playgrounds border the Recovering Hope Treatment Center for addiction that sits at the end of a gravel road in eastern Minnesota's rural Kanabec County. A meeting room inside is furnished with rocking chairs and baby walkers. And there are strollers in the halls. Recovering Hope is one of only five providers in the state that offer family-based residential treatment, allowing women to enter the program while pregnant or to bring one of their children younger than 5 with them for the duration of their stay. Men can receive outpatient treatment but aren't permitted in the residential program. It's the...

### **Targeted ultrasound can change brain functions for up to an hour after intervention**

The targeted use of ultrasound technology can bring about significant changes in brain function that could pave the way towards treatment of conditions such as depression, addiction, or anxiety, a new study suggests. Research by neuroscientists at the University of Plymouth explored the impacts of an emerging technique called transcranial ultrasound stimulation (TUS). Typically, ultrasound examinations involve diffuse broad beams of ultrasound being used to create images while leaving the target tissue unaffected. However, focusing the beams through TUS can increase the pressure in...

## **Funding Opportunities**



[PAR-23-298](#)

[Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-23-299](#)

[Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health \(R21 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)



[PAR-23-285](#)

[Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[RFA-DA-25-003](#)

[Cohort Studies of HIV/AIDS and Substance Use \(U01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-AA-23-005](#)

[HEAL Initiative: Developing an Evidence Base for Co-Occurring OUD-AUD Interventions \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[RFA-AA-23-006](#)

[HEAL Initiative: Developing an Evidence Base for Co-Occurring OUD-AUD Interventions \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

### **UC Foundation Funding Opportunities**

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or [carol.russell@uc.edu](mailto:carol.russell@uc.edu) **at least 5 business days before the deadline**, prior to applying to the below opportunity, to ensure coordination and to facilitate assistance with approaches.

### **[School-based mental health implementation grant opportunity announced](#)**

[Deadline: October 1, 2023](#)

School-Based Healthcare Solutions Network (SBHSN) is a private grant giving organization that funds and supports under-resourced public and public charter schools to implement and expand access to quality behavioral health and general pediatric services on school campuses to children living in urban and rural communities. Awards range up to \$5.5 million over five years. Funding is renewable based on meeting program goals. In response to the growing number of students in need of mental health counseling, SBHSN is accepting applications from Local Education Agencies, Public and Private Universities, State and local Colleges, Charter School Management Companies, Public Schools, Charter Schools, and Non-Profit Organizations (501c3) to implement and expand mental health program services on local school campuses. **Ohio is among eligible states. An award requires an MOU with the selected school district.** Grantees will receive direct funding to support the following activities:

- Recruiting, employing, and placing qualified mental health professionals on school campuses.
- Expanding access to School-Based Social and Emotional Learning.
- Coordinating mental healthcare services with school administration and staff.
- Delivering mental healthcare services and coordinating academic-support activities to students with a history of attendance, behavior, and poor academic performance.



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