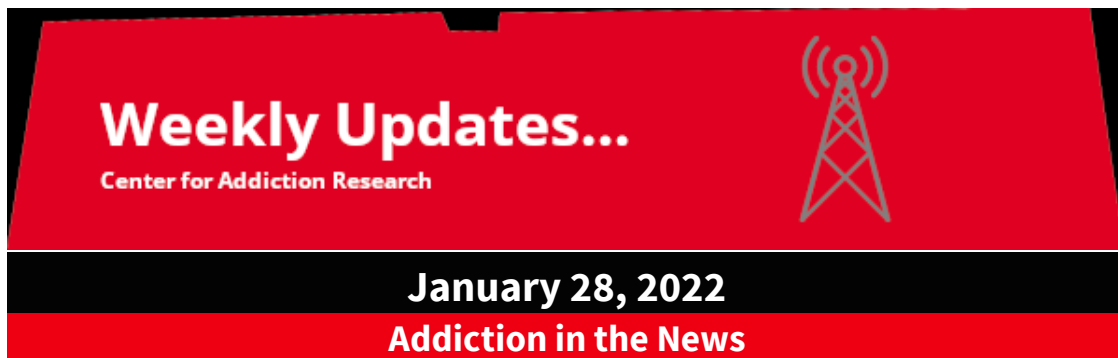


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 1.28.2022

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. **Please note that the weekly newsletter will be on hiatus Friday, February 11, through Friday, March 11.** 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

Youngstown-area doctor admits to prescribing opioids illegally to patients

CLEVELAND, Ohio – A suburban Youngstown doctor admitted Monday that he illegally prescribed opioids to his patients, two of whom died of overdoses. Martin Escobar, 58, of Lake Milton, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Cleveland to 85 charges involving his work as a pain-management specialist. Federal prosecutors sought enhancements because of the deaths, which took place in 2015 and 2016. He faces a maximum...

Ohio Attorney General attends Drug Dropoff Day in Montgomery & Clark County


DAYTON, Ohio (WKEF) -- Dayton 24/7 Now teamed up with the Ohio Attorney General and local sheriffs for Drug Dropoff Day to ask for your help in disposing of unused and expired prescription drugs. 3 locations across the Miami Valley collected 711 pounds of prescription drugs Saturday. Locations include Utilities Department in Springfield, Tecumseh Middle School in New Carlisle, and Fire Station 11 in Dayton. The focus of the event...

Pharmacy loses in opioid case ruling

Just this past November, a federal jury in Cleveland delivered the first jury verdict in an opioid case and the first verdict against a pharmacy. In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to opioid pain relievers, and healthcare providers began to

prescribe them at greater rates. Increased prescription of opioid medications led to widespread misuse...

for💰 — Drug traffickers using social media, emojis to peddle increasingly counterfeit narcotics

CLEVELAND — In the last year, the illicit drug trade has moved further into the digital world, with traffickers increasingly utilizing social media and even coded emojis to avoid drawing the attention of law enforcement, while continuing to up the production of dangerous counterfeit pills, according to the DEA, who late last year launched the second phase of their national "One Pill Can Kill" campaign.  for💰 - DEA says they've...

National News

The Pandemic May Have Created A Nation Of Problem Drinkers – And Many Are Women.

[CNN](#) (1/22, LaMotte, 89.21M) reported that the pandemic led many Americans to alter their habits when it came to consuming alcohol, often drinking in isolation instead of drinking socially as before the pandemic. Massachusetts General Hospital Substance Use Disorders Initiative Medical Director Dr. Sarah Wakeman said, “The data we have shows that drinking is definitely up since the start of the pandemic – around a 14% increase in the number of drinking days per month.” Furthermore, Wakeman said that there has “actually been a 41% increase in heavy drinking days among women since onset of the pandemic.” The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism is mentioned.

The US Federal Government Just Bought A Ton Of Marijuana For Medical Research For The First Time Ever.

The [Cannabis.net](#) (1/19, Leaf) reports, “The five-decade-long federal monopoly on cannabis production has been broken by Groff North America Hemplex and the Biopharmaceutical Research Company,” which “announced that they successfully harvested cannabis from their experimental sites in the last few weeks.” The DEA in early 2021 granted the two companies permission to “establish a grow section for cannabis research.” In a statement, National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Dr. Nora Volkow “suggested that these new facilities investigate the chemical properties of medicinal cannabis in dispensaries to know the exact type of cannabis to supply,” which “would help build on available information on the benefits and risks of common medical cannabis products.”

Research Suggests Cannabis Use Can Cause Cognitive Impairments Beyond Initial Use Period.

[Healthline](#) (1/19, Hicks, 3.62M) reported researchers in a new study “say cannabis users can have cognitive impairments beyond the initial use period.” The impairments “can affect decision making, memory, and the ability to complete mental tasks.” However, some experts “say the research is flawed because it

doesn't take into account the different types of cannabis and the different ways it can be ingested." The researchers looked at how cannabis affected more than 43,000 participants, and "reported that cannabis causes small to moderate cognitive impairments in areas that impact decision making, suppressing inappropriate responses, learning, and remembering through listening and reading as well as how much time someone needs to complete mental tasks." The study "suggests that the negative health effects of cannabis, which begin during consumption, can last for a significant amount of time."

Not Your Parents' Pot: Teen Cannabis Use Raises Red Flags.

[Medscape](#) (1/21, Scherer, Subscription Publication, 219K) reported that, "thanks to expanded medical and recreational availability of cannabis in the United States, a growing number of adolescents are using the drug – with potentially dangerous and mostly unintended consequences. And both parents and practitioners are being caught off guard." Krista Lisdahl, "PhD, director of the Brain Imaging and Neuropsychology Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and principal investigator in the National Institutes of Health's ongoing Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study, said: 'My work, as well as the work of a lot of other colleagues, has shown that younger kids do have more negative consequences from more regular cannabis exposure.'"

Marijuana Edibles Spurring Rise In Pot-Related Overdose Calls To Illinois Poison Center – But Number Is Lower Than For Other Legal Drugs.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (1/20, McCoppin, 2.03M) reports, "Marijuana edibles are becoming increasingly popular, but doctors warn the substances are prone to accidental consumption or may pack too much of a wallop for new users." Newly released findings "show marijuana overdose-related calls in Illinois jumped significantly after legalization, mainly due to edibles – but remained far below the number of calls for other legal drugs, including alcohol." The amount "of calls to the Illinois Poison Center for cannabis rose from 487 in 2019, to 743 in 2020, the year recreational weed was legalized in the state, and increased again to 855 in 2021." The Tribune adds, "Adolescent cannabis use nationwide decreased significantly in 2021, according to the 2021 Monitoring the Future survey produced by the National Institute on Drug Abuse."

University Of Mississippi Launches Center For Cannabis Research & Education.

[Ganjapreneur](#) (1/21, Branfalt) reported, "The University of Mississippi on Thursday launched the National Center for Cannabis Research and Education (NCCE) which will conduct scientific research, data analysis, education, and training on the health effects of cannabis." NCCE "and its researchers, based in the university's School of Pharmacy, will also aid in policymaking and outreach as state programs emerge throughout the US." The National Institute on Drug Abuse Drug Supply Program is mentioned.

FDA Approves IND For Clinical Trial To Evaluate CBD As Adjunctive Method To Treat Opioid Use Disorder.

[Forbes](#) (1/25, Sabaghi, 10.33M) reports that the FDA “has approved an investigational new drug (IND) application for a clinical trial to evaluate CBD as an adjunctive method to treat opioid use disorder.” [Lead in to Forbes article follows.]

“Biotech pharma company Ananda Scientific Inc. announced in January 2022 the FDA's approval for the clinical trial evaluating Nanteia ATL5, an investigational drug using CBD as an adjunctive treatment for opioid use disorder. The study will be conducted at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Nanteia ATL5 is an oral product with 100mg of CBD per soft gel capsule utilizing Liquid Structure technology, licensed from the Israeli pharmaceutical company Lyotropic Delivery Systems, which enhances the effectiveness and stability of CBD. Pre-clinical and initial clinical studies show that ANANDA's Liquid Structure technology would enhance the effectiveness and stability of CBD. According to the company, this innovation may create new potential for CBD therapeutics, as it may have the ability to reduce opioid intake in patients being treated or addicted to opioids.”

Opioid Overdose Antidote Urged For Schools After Student's Fentanyl Death.

[HealthDay](#) (1/24, Preidt, 11K) reports in continuing coverage that experts are calling for schools to “stock the opioid overdose antidote naloxone and train staff and students how to respond to an overdose...after the apparent fentanyl overdose death of seventh grader at a school in Hartford,” Connecticut. The National Institute of Drug Abuse is mentioned.

Opinion: Widespread Use Of Tools For Fighting Overdose Crisis Prevented By Stigma, Bureaucratic Ineptitude.

In an opinion for the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, 10.52M), author Beth Macy, who is an executive producer and co-writer on Hulu's “Dopesick” series, describes the measures she sees “taken by people desperately fighting, largely on their own, against a drug-overdose death toll that historically has killed more Americans than the coronavirus pandemic.” She says that the widespread use of tools available to save lives from fatal overdoses “is the stigma and bureaucratic ineptitude that have always marked our relationship to those who use, and need, drugs.” Macy adds, “The pandemic-prompted loosening of federal regulations for the telehealth prescribing of buprenorphine, the lifesaving addiction medication, has been a bright spot,” but “that policy change remains temporary and the treatment gap...has barely budged.”

Two Babies In Same California Town Overdose On Fentanyl In Same Week.

[Fox News](#) (1/26, Conklin, 23.99M) reports, “Two babies in the same California town overdosed on fentanyl in the same week, according to local reports.” Bakersfield law enforcement officials on Jan. 21 “responded to a home on Lake Street and

found an unresponsive 9-month-old baby, who officers transported to a nearby hospital,” where it “remains in stable condition, KGET reported.”

Treating Addiction As A Crime Doesn't Work. What Oregon Is Doing Just Might.

In a guest essay for the [New York Times](#) (1/26, 20.6M), author Maia Szalavitz writes that people “who are caught in Oregon with personal-use amounts of heroin, methamphetamine or other drugs receive the equivalent of a traffic ticket, which carries a \$100 fine.” Szalavitz says, “By decriminalizing personal-use drug possession, Oregon has become the first state to acknowledge that it is impossible to treat addiction as a disease and a crime simultaneously.” She adds, “This kind of model is urgently needed in the United States, where street fentanyl is the leading cause of death among people ages 18 to 45, and where sending people to jail for using drugs has failed to prevent the worst addiction and overdose crisis in American history.” National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Dr. Nora Volkow said, “The research is unequivocal that putting someone who is addicted into prison or jail actually exacerbates their condition and puts them at much greater risk for relapse.”

San Francisco Allows People To Use Drugs Inside New Tenderloin Treatment Linkage Center.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (1/26, Moench, Fagan, 2.44M) reports, “San Francisco is allowing people to use drugs in an outdoor area of Mayor London Breed’s new Tenderloin Linkage Center in United Nations Plaza, interviews and Chronicle observations confirm.” San Francisco also “offers basic hygiene services, food, clothing and connections to services such as treatment and housing on the first floor of the seven-story building.” A spokesperson for the mayor said in an email that the “emergency initiative is about doing everything we can to help people struggling with addiction, and getting them connected to services and treatment. As part of that, the linkage center is serving as a low-barrier site to bring people off the street.”

Federal Government Investigates Health Plans For Violations Of Mental Health Parity Laws.

[Modern Healthcare](#) (1/26, Hellmann, Subscription Publication, 215K) reports, “Thirty group health plans have been put on notice by the federal government for not covering behavioral health services and potentially violating mental health parity laws.” In a report released Tuesday, the “Labor Department doesn’t name specific companies but gave examples of violations, including a ‘large service provider’ administering claims for hundreds of self-funded plans excluding therapy to treat autism.” Other “plans failed to cover medication-assisted treatment, viewed by addiction specialists as the ‘gold-standard’ for treating opioid use disorder.” In total, “the Labor Department and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued ‘initial determination’ letters to 30 plans, finding 48

limitations or exclusions on coverage for mental health services that were more stringent than comparable medical or surgical services.”

Campaign Targets People Of Color To Help End Drug Addiction Disparities.

[KTNV-TV](#) Las Vegas (1/26, 113K) reports on Keith Hayes, director of recovery at 5280 High School in Colorado, which “serves students who struggle with substance abuse, self-harm, and other destructive behaviors.” Hayes describes his experience recovering from drug addiction, and notes how important a connection was for him. The article says [National Institute of Drug Abuse Director Dr. Nora Volkow](#) “and Hayes agree that connection is key for someone to get out of addiction.” Volkow said, “Without those social support systems, it is extremely difficult for almost anyone to be able to achieve recovery.” Hayes, a Black man, said connection can be difficult because, “We’re raised as Black men to not ask for help.” An anti-stigma campaign in Colorado aims to change that by integrating “different voices and faces.”

3 Factors Helped Teens Stay Mentally Healthy During Pandemic.

[HealthDay](#) (1/25, Preidt, 11K) reports in continuing coverage that a new analysis indicates “support from family and friends, along with exercise and sufficient sleep, have helped protect teens’ mental health during the pandemic.” The research, which was funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), “also found that teen girls have been more likely than boys to suffer mental distress during the pandemic.” The study was based on “data gathered from more than 3,000 participants, aged 11 to 14, in the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development.” The findings were published Jan. 24 in the Journal of Adolescent Health. NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow said, “Early adolescence is a time when youth are already experiencing rapid change physically, emotionally and socially, and the COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense disruption to this sensitive stage in life.”

Additional Source. [UPI](#) (1/25, Preidt) republishes the article.

HHS Providing \$13M To Boost Access To Behavioral Healthcare Services.

[HealthcareNOW Radio](#) (1/25) reports HHS, “through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), announced the availability of \$13 million in funding to increase access to behavioral health care services and address health inequities in rural America, including through evidence-based, trauma-informed treatment for substance use disorder.” HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has caused behavioral health challenges for Americans of all ages and backgrounds. ... This investment is part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s efforts to address the inequities that still exist surrounding behavioral health and advance care in rural America. It will support comprehensive behavioral health prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery interventions in rural communities – furthering the goals of our new overdose prevention strategy.”

Army's Mental Health Crisis In Alaska Worsens As Suicide Deaths Increase.

[USA Today](#) (1/27, Brook, 12.7M) reports, "The Army's mental-health emergency in Alaska spiked in 2021 with 17 suspected suicide deaths – more suicides than in the previous two years combined." This crisis "has deepened in recent months: eight soldiers are suspected to have died by suicide since October, according to figures released by the Army to USA TODAY." Their deaths "have rattled soldiers there and seized the attention of the Pentagon's top civilian and military leadership as well as lawmakers on Capitol Hill."

Psychedelics & MDMA Are Finally Being Legalised For Mental Health Therapy.

[Vice](#) (1/20, Lanigan, 1.13M) reports that Canada this month became "one of the first countries making steps towards" making therapeutic use of recreational and psychedelic drugs more widely available, "with a Special Access Program that allows physicians to request restricted psychedelic drugs for their patients." According to Vice, "This allows Canadian doctors to streamline access to consciousness-altering substances, such as ketamine, LSD or MDMA, to be ingested in a clinical setting as part of a wider treatment alongside more traditional psychotherapy." The NIH is mentioned.

Maine Sees Drug Overdose Deaths Increase By 23 Percent In 2021.

The [AP](#) (1/20) reports, "The number of drug overdose deaths in Maine increased" by 23% in 2021. The Portland Press Herald reported that an estimated 636 people died of overdoses in 2021.

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[NOT-AA-22-008](#)

[Notice of NIAAA's Participation in RFA-DA-22-047, "HEAL Initiative: Understanding Polysubstance Use and Improving Service Delivery to Address Polysubstance Use \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-AA-22-009](#)

[Notice of NIAAA's Participation in RFA-DA-22-048, "HEAL Initiative: Pilot & Feasibility Trials to Improve Prevention and Treatment Service Delivery for Polysubstance Use \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-DA-23-001](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Research to Prevent Drug Use, Misuse and Addiction](#)

[PAR-22-102](#)

[Investigational New Drug \(IND\)-enabling and Early-Stage Development of Medications to Treat Alcohol Use disorder and Alcohol-Associated Organ Damage \(U43/U44 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-22-103](#)

[Investigational New Drug \(IND\)-enabling and Early-Stage Development of Medications to Treat Alcohol Use disorder and Alcohol-Associated Organ Damage \(UT1/UT2 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-22-058](#)

[Emergency Awards: HEAL Initiative: Translational Science Career Enhancement Awards for Early and Mid-career Investigators \(K18 Clinical Trials Not Allowed\)](#)

[RFA-MH-22-175](#)

[Emergency Award HEAL Initiative: Optimizing Existing Evidence-Based Multi-Component Service Delivery Interventions for People with Opioid Use Disorder, Co-Occurring Conditions, and/or Suicide Risk \(R01 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[RFA-MH-22-176](#)

[Emergency Award HEAL Initiative: Developing and Optimizing Multi-Component Service Delivery Interventions for People with Opioid Use Disorder, Co-Occurring Conditions, and/or Suicide Risk \(R01 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[RFA-TR-22-013](#)

[Emergency Awards: HEAL Initiative- New Innovator Award \(DP2 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

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