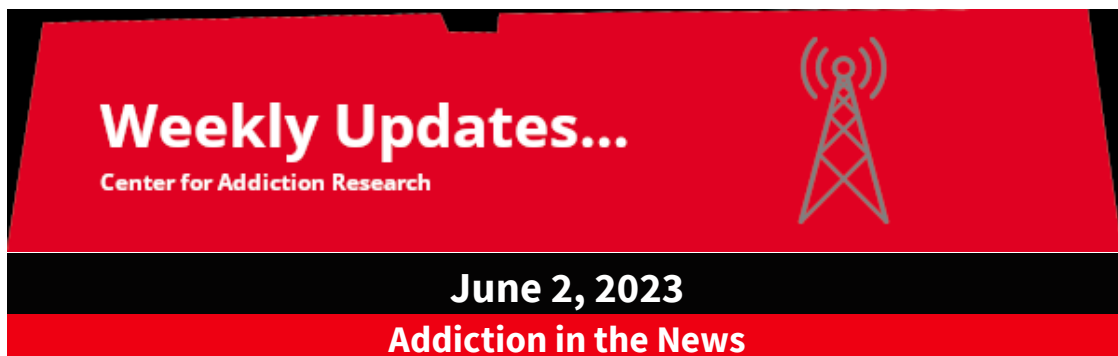


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 6.2.2023

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

Center for Addiction Research Upcoming Summer Speaker Series

Back by popular demand, the Center for Addiction Research will hold its first 2023 virtual Summer Speaker Series event, Wednesday, June 14 at 12pm on “Addressing Substance Use Among Youth in Foster Care: Implementation and Evaluation of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in a Foster Care Clinic”, with presenter, CAR member, and CAR Core Co-Leader Population Health and Health Services, Dr. Shauna Acquavita. The series is sponsored by Center for Clinical & Translational Science & Training. [\(pdf invitation attached\)](#)

>> Register for any of the three summer presentations

Mental Health Recovery Board volunteers expand reach of services offered

CINCINNATI (WKRC) - A group of volunteers is expanding its reach of mental health services for hundreds in the Tri-State. The Mental Health Recovery Board serves Warren and Clinton Counties. It's comprised of more than a dozen board members that volunteer their time helping others. Drug and alcohol addiction services and crisis intervention are just some of the things they do. Colleen Chamberlain, the board's executive director, says the board provides mental health funding so that people in Warren and Clinton Counties can have access to public mental health support. “So, we serve those folks who are unable, underinsured, or not insured at all, to get mental health...”

Kentucky's \$42 million allocation for psychedelics research for opioid addiction

Today, Daniel Cameron, Attorney General for the US State of Kentucky, announced that the State will take \$42 million from its portion of the Opioid Settlement Funds and use it for psychedelic research, specifically ibogaine for opioid addiction. AG Cameron will be joined with LtGen Martin Steele and his 501c3 organization Reason for Hope, who was instrumental in educating Kentucky lawmakers on the policy and reform necessary to advance access to psychedelic-assisted therapy. Ibogaine is a naturally occurring psychoactive found in the iboga plant well known for its hallucinogenic powers and a...

I-TEAM: Several local communities among hottest destinations for illegal drug shipments in Ohio

DAYTON — A News Center 7 I-Team investigation found drug dealers mailed more than 150 tons of drugs like meth, marijuana, and fentanyl through the U.S. mail in the last few years. Nearly eight tons of it were headed to Ohio. The I-Team's lead investigative reporter, John Bedell, dug into why investigators are finding so much of it in the Miami Valley and which neighborhoods those potentially deadly deliveries were headed to. U.S. Postal inspectors told the I-Team that finding packages with meth, fentanyl, and other dangerous drugs is one of their top priorities because they know the deadly impact those have had in our communities. So, the I-Team dug through the data to see which of...

ADAMHS Board allocates \$13.7 million for county addiction and mental health services

The Wood County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board allocated \$13.7 million for addiction and mental health services in the coming fiscal year, which starts July 1. The funds which are provided to a multitude of agencies ensure Wood County residents have access to high-quality mental health and addiction services. Services range from housing options, crisis and mobile stabilization services for children and adults and mental health education, prevention and support services to new and existing programs targeting substance use disorders prevention and treatment and suicide...

VOICES: Never forget the veterans impacted by drug addiction

Countless veterans have lost battles with substance use and mental health disorders, whether by overdose or suicide. It is a problem that impacts veteran communities nationwide. This Memorial Day, millions of American families will take the time to honor the memory of the men and women who lost their lives fighting in one of the nation's wars. Outside of this day, we must never lose sight of the millions of veterans struggling with addiction and mental health issues. In Ohio are over 720,000 veterans, most of whom are wartime vets. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, over 3.9 million veterans have a substance use disorder or mental illness. Substance...

National News

Researchers identify link between alternative gene splicing and risk of alcohol use disorder

Researchers at Indiana University School of Medicine have discovered alternative gene splicing, which occurs during gene expression, can impact a person's risk of alcohol use disorder (AUD). They recently published their findings in *Molecular Psychiatry*. "AUD is a common and complex genetic disorder that happens people experience problems related to excessive alcohol consumption," said Rudong Li, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow in the YunLong Liu, Ph.D. Laboratory and lead author of the paper. "This discovery has revealed a novel perspective about AUD and opens up new possibilities for finding..."

Genetic risk information may help people avoid alcohol addiction, suggests study

Today's substance use prevention efforts ignore individual genetic risk, but new Rutgers University research suggests that DNA test results may eventually enhance prevention and treatment and improve outcomes. Investigators recruited 325 college students, provided them with varying levels of information about alcohol use disorder and how genetics affect addiction risk, and asked them how they would react to learning they had high, medium and low genetic tendencies toward alcoholism. The results provided two significant supports for eventually using real genetic risk scores in actual addiction...

Researchers develop alcohol intervention for women attending breast screening appointments

Monash University, Turning Point and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) have developed a successful alcohol intervention for women attending breast screening appointments, as part of a world-first trial. Published in the *Medical Journal of Australia (MJA)*, the study improved participants' knowledge about alcohol and its link with breast cancer. Alcohol is a major modifiable risk factor for female breast cancer; in Australia, alcohol consumption accounts for 6.6 percent of cases in post-menopausal women, and 18 percent of breast cancer deaths. Yet, awareness of this risk remains...

Neighborhood access to alcohol might be linked to raised risk of suicide attempts

Living in a neighborhood with bars or government-run alcohol outlets may increase suicidal behavior among young adults, especially men and those with elevated genetic liability for attempting suicide, a new study suggests. The paper, in *Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental Research*, is the latest attempt to clarify the link between alcohol accessibility and suicidal behavior. This complex relationship is proving difficult to unravel. Both acute drinking and alcohol use disorder are associated with increased suicide risk, potentially because of behavioral inhibition, depressed mood, or aggression. The link...

Heavy Drinking Could Be Jeopardizing Your Muscles

According to a new study by the University of East Anglia, individuals who consume alcohol heavily may be jeopardizing their muscle health and predisposing themselves to frailty as they age. The study utilized statistical models to demonstrate that those with the least muscle mass were consuming at least 10 units of alcohol daily, equivalent to about one bottle of wine. Given that individuals with larger bodies generally possess more muscle mass, the researchers adjusted their analysis for body size. They also considered other influencing factors, such as the level of physical activity and protein intake...

Study allows for faster narcotics classification of novel internet drugs

New psychoactive substances (NPS), also known as "internet drugs," are substances developed to affect the brain in a similar way to illegal drugs. Researchers at Linköping University, Sweden, in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Sweden and the National Board of Forensic Medicine, have set up a rapid method for measuring the effect of new NPS and provide scientific basis for narcotics classification. This method made it possible to classify a majority of the substances tested as narcotic drugs. The method and the result of analyses of 17 suspected psychoactive cannabinoid...

Enhanced treatment may help fast nicotine metabolizers quit smoking

A study from Vanderbilt researchers has found that enhanced treatment support can help smokers who have more difficulty quitting because they are fast metabolizers of nicotine. The study published in *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* is the latest finding from the Vanderbilt Center for Tobacco, Addiction and Lifestyle (VITAL) that supports a personalized medicine approach to smoking cessation. Researchers previously determined that fast metabolizers benefit more from varenicline—a medication that mimics the pleasant effects of nicotine on the brain—than nicotine replacement therapy, such as the patch...

Sweden close to becoming first 'smoke free' country in Europe as daily use of cigarettes dwindles

Summer is in the air, cigarette smoke is not, in Sweden's outdoor bars and restaurants. As the World Health Organization marks "World No Tobacco Day" on Wednesday, Sweden, which has the lowest rate of smoking in the Europe Union, is close to declaring itself "smoke free"—defined as having fewer than 5% daily smokers in the population. Many experts give credit to decades of anti-smoking campaigns and legislation, while others point to the prevalence of "snus," a smokeless tobacco product that is banned elsewhere in the EU but is marketed in Sweden as an alternative to cigarettes. Whatever the reason, the 5%...

In Canada, each cigarette will get a warning label: 'poison in every puff'

Canada will soon become the first country in the world where warning labels must appear on individual cigarettes. The move was first announced last year by Health Canada and is aimed at helping people quit the habit. The regulations take effect Aug. 1 and will be phased in. King-size cigarettes will be the first to feature the warnings and will be sold in stores by the end of July 2024, followed by regular-size cigarettes, and little cigars with tipping paper and tubes by the end of April 2025. "This bold step will make health warning messages virtually unavoidable," Mental Health and Addictions Minister Carolyn...

FDA Conducts Retailer Inspection Blitz, Cracks Down on Illegal Sales of Popular Disposable E-cigarettes

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued warning letters to 30 retailers, including one distributor, for illegally selling unauthorized tobacco products. The unauthorized products were various types of Puff and Hyde brand disposable e-cigarettes, which were two of the most commonly reported brands used by youth e-cigarette users in 2022. The Puff products include Puff Bar. Today's action underscores the agency's unwavering commitment to addressing the role retailers and distributors of unauthorized tobacco products play in this concerning public health issue facing America's youth. "Protecting our...

Research highlights global impact of smokeless tobacco use

A team from the University of York and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), in collaboration with the ASTRA (Addressing Smokeless Tobacco and Building Research Capacity in South Asia) consortium, conducted a comprehensive review focusing on policies related to smokeless tobacco, exploring their context, and investigating their impact on smokeless tobacco use. The research examined data from 2005 to 2021, which showed that 57 countries have implemented policies specifically targeting smokeless tobacco, with 17 of them having policies beyond the scope of the World Health...

Need help to quit smoking? A known drug might help reduce nicotine cravings

A drug that was originally developed to treat diabetes and severe overweight might also help people with nicotine dependence, concludes new research from the University of Copenhagen. Smoking is one of the greatest threats to public health. According to new data from the Danish Health Authority, 15,920 Danes die every year because of their addiction to cigarettes. And 75% of smokers want to quit. So why don't they? The answer is: nicotine. It is one of the most addictive known substances. According to the Danish Health Authority, almost one in four Danes is addicted to at least one nicotine...

Quitting Smoking May Ease Anxiety, Depression

People who quit smoking for at least 15 weeks may see improvements in their mental health, a secondary analysis of the EAGLES trial showed. In adults with and

without a psychiatric history, those who quit smoking for that duration saw reductions in Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) scores at 6 months compared with active smokers, reported Angela Difeng Wu, MSc, of the University of Oxford in England, and coauthors. After adjustment for various factors, sustained smoking cessation was associated with a 0.40-point difference for anxiety (95% CI -0.58 to -0.22) and 0.47-point difference for...

Tobacco use is costly, but so is quitting. Surveys of 8 African countries show who needs help

Tobacco use imposes a large health and economic burden worldwide. Research estimates that, in 2019, about 8 million deaths were attributable to tobacco smoking. Tobacco also reduces years of healthy living: about 200 million disability-adjusted life years in 2019. This health burden comes with high economic costs, directly through medical treatment for tobacco-related diseases, and indirectly through productivity losses. Globally, the total economic cost of smoking amounted to around 1.8% of the world's annual GDP in 2012. Global studies are rare because they are so data intensive. Though...

Researchers question law requiring CPS notification when medications for opioid use disorder are used during pregnancy

In the United States, federal legislation mandates that all states track data on all newborns who have been exposed to substances during pregnancy and ensure that a plan of Safe Care is created for each family. Yet each state manages those regulations differently. In Massachusetts, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) has issued guidance that any prenatal substance exposure—including exposure to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)—is an indication to file a report for alleged child abuse/neglect upon the birth of the child. MOUD including methadone and buprenorphine are...

Most Injection Drug Users Are Not Seeking Out Fentanyl: Study

THURSDAY, June 1, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- Many Americans who inject illicit drugs are unknowingly getting fentanyl mixed in with their heroin, which can increase their risk for overdose and perhaps their tolerance for the drug. About 80% of injection drug users in New York City test positive for fentanyl, but only 18% intended to use that drug, according to research from NYU School of Global Public Health. "As the proportion of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl continues to increase, it's important to monitor how often people are exposed to fentanyl and any changes in preference for..."

Studying the body's opioid system could reduce side effects of opioid drugs

Opioid drugs such as morphine and fentanyl are like the two-faced Roman god Janus: The kindly face delivers pain relief to millions of sufferers, while the grim face drives an opioid abuse and overdose crisis that claimed nearly 70,000 lives in the U.S. in 2020 alone. Scientists like me who study pain and opioids have been seeking

a way to separate these two seemingly inseparable faces of opioids. Researchers are trying to design drugs that deliver effective pain relief without the risk of side effects, including addiction and overdose. One possible path to achieving that goal lies in understanding the molecular pathways...

State policies can boost use of anti-opioid medication

States that want to increase access to buprenorphine, a lifesaving medication used to treat opioid use disorder, should consider efforts to enhance professional education and clinician knowledge, according to a new RAND Corporation study. Examining six state-level policies aimed at boosting use of buprenorphine, researchers found that requiring buprenorphine prescribers to receive additional education beyond the initially required instruction, as well as continuing medical education related to substance misuse, were both associated with a significant increase in use of the treatment. The findings are...

Know the Dangers of 'Gas Station Heroin'

When you walk into a gas station or convenience store, you don't expect to find an addictive drug on the shelf. But in most states, you might. And you wouldn't even know it from looking at the package. This drug, known as tianeptine or "gas station heroin," is an opioid, like heroin and morphine. And like other opioids, it's addictive and potentially deadly. Yet it can be found on store shelves, labeled as a dietary supplement, and anyone can walk in and buy it — including minors. Addiction psychiatrist Akhil Anand, MD, explains the facts about this dangerous substance. What is gas station heroin? Gas station...

DEA moves to revoke major drug distributor's license over opioid crisis failures

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration says it will strip one of the nation's largest drug distributors of its license to sell and ship highly addictive painkillers within 90 days if some kind of negotiated settlement isn't reached. In a statement, DEA Administrator Anne Milgram said executives at Morris & Dickson failed to accept responsibility for the "full extent of their wrongdoing ... and the potential harm it caused." If finalized, this action taken Friday would hobble the nation's fourth-largest drug wholesaler. It comes after a controversial four-year delay. In a statement sent to NPR, the Louisiana-based company...

House Passes Bill to Address Fentanyl Overdoses

The House passed a bill Thursday that proponents say is designed to reduce the number of people who become addicted to fentanyl, but opponents say it won't solve the problem and will just increase the number of people incarcerated for drug-related crimes. The Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl (HALT Fentanyl) Act passed by a vote of 289-133, with 215 Republicans and 74 Democrats voting in favor. The measure would: Permanently put fentanyl-related substances into Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. Currently, fentanyl is on Schedule I through Dec. 31, 2024, thanks to a...

Purdue Pharma can protect Sackler owners in opioid bankruptcy, court rules

NEW YORK, May 30 (Reuters) - Bankrupt OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma can shield its owners, members of the wealthy Sackler family, from opioid lawsuits in exchange for a \$6 billion contribution to the company's broader bankruptcy settlement, a U.S. appeals court ruled on Tuesday. The New York-based 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said that U.S. bankruptcy law allows legal protections for non-bankrupt parties, like the Sacklers, in extraordinary circumstances. In a majority opinion written by 2nd Circuit Judge Eunice Lee, the court ruled that the legal claims against Purdue were...

Opinion: In BC, Alberta and around the world, forcing drug users into treatment is a violent policy

Intervention without human rights goes by many names—involuntary institutionalization, compulsory drug treatment, "coerced care," forced abstinence or a combination of all of those terms. Involuntary treatment in the Global South has been labeled inhumane by rights-based organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNAIDS and Human Rights Watch. But after years of housing unaffordability, an increasingly poisonous drug supply and inaccessible voluntary mental health supports, mainstream political parties in Canada—including Alberta's United Conservative Party (UCP)...

In defense of being 'Cali sober'

The phenomenon of being "Cali sober" is taking the recovery world by storm. It is defined as dedicating oneself to a life free of drugs and alcohol — except for cannabis and other psychedelics. (Though many consumers don't think of cannabis as a psychedelic, policy experts often consider it one because of its effects.) Hardcore proponents of abstinence-based recovery, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, dismiss the Cali sober approach as dangerous and "not really recovery." Those who make their livings by treating addiction the traditional ways, such as addiction specialists and representatives...

Adopting the term 'preaddiction' would be a serious mistake

The National Institute on Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism recently proposed a new addition to the addiction vernacular: "preaddiction." The idea is that the word will help identify and intervene on harmful substance use earlier and more effectively. While it's an admirable goal, the term fails to align with the evidence. Worse, adopting it could have potentially disastrous consequences for people with substance use disorders — an already marginalized group. The term "preaddiction" was proposed by federal agencies to raise awareness about harmful substance use, increase...

Could Ozempic Be A Potential Addiction Cure?

Since 2017, the injectable prescription drug, Ozempic, has been used by type 2 diabetics to help manage their blood sugar. Ozempic's popularity has grown significantly in recent years for its incredible weight loss side effects. Because of this, Ozempic has become one of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the country, with nearly 5 million prescriptions in 2020. However, scientists have recently started to realize that Ozempic might do even more than regulate hunger and blood sugar; it may have potential as a treatment medication for substance use disorders. Scientists believe the same traits that...

Obesity increases risk of mental disorders throughout life

Being obese significantly increases the chances of also developing mental disorders. This applies to all age groups, with women at higher risk than men for most diseases, as a recent study of the Complexity Science Hub and the Medical University of Vienna shows. The results were published in the specialist journal Translational Psychiatry. "We analyzed a population-wide national registry of inpatient hospitalizations in Austria from 1997 to 2014 in order to determine the relative risks of comorbidities in obesity and identify statistically significant sex differences," explains Elma Dervic of the Complexity Science...

FDA warns about herbal drug kratom, used for pain relief: What to know about side effects

Millions of Americans have turned to kratom, an over-the-counter herbal drug extracted from the leaves of a tree native to Southeast Asia, for relief of pain, anxiety and even withdrawal symptoms from opioids. But the Food and Drug Administration has said kratom may be harmful. The agency has sought to restrict imports of the substance and recently seized a large shipment to an Oklahoma manufacturer. Still, millions of users regularly buy kratom as pills, capsules or other forms at convenience stores and smoke shops. Kratom is extracted from the leaves of *Mitragyna speciosa*, a tree native to Thailand...

Funding Opportunities



No funding opportunities to post this week.

Mapping prescription drug monitoring program data to self-report measures of non-medical prescription opioid use in community pharmacy settings

Elizabeth Charron, Jennifer H Brooks, Keegan T Peterson, Olusegun G Akinwolere, T Winhusen, Gerald Cochran

Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2023.04.121>

ABSTRACT

Background: Community pharmacists are well-positioned to identify patients engaged in non-medical prescription opioid use (NMPOU) through Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) databases. Integrating patient-reported outcomes with PDMP data may improve the interpretability of PDMP information to support clinical decision-making.

Objective: This study linked patient-reported clinical measures of substance use with PDMP data to examine relationships between average daily opioid dose in morphine milligram equivalents (MME) and visits to multiple pharmacies/prescribers with self-reported NMPOU.

Methods: Data from a cross-sectional health assessment given to patients aged ≥ 18 years filling opioid prescriptions were linked to PDMP records. NMPOU in the past three months was assessed on a continuous scale (range 0–39) using an adapted version of the Alcohol, Smoking, and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST). PDMP measures included average daily MME and number of distinct pharmacies/prescribers visited in the past 180 days. Univariable and multivariable zero-inflated negative binomial models estimated associations between PDMP measures and any NMPOU and severity of use.

Results: The sample included 1421 participants. In multivariable models adjusted for sociodemographic, mental health, and physical health characteristics, any NMPOU was associated with higher average daily MME (adjusted OR = 1.22, 95% CI = 1.05–1.39) and number of distinct prescribers visited (adjusted OR = 1.15, 95% CI = 1.01–1.30). Higher average daily MME (adjusted mean ratio (MR) = 1.12, 95% CI = 1.08–1.15), number of distinct pharmacies visited (adjusted MR = 1.11, 95% CI = 1.04–1.18), and number of distinct prescribers visited (adjusted MR = 1.07, 95% CI = 1.02–1.11) were associated with increased NMPOU severity.

Conclusions: We observed significant, positive associations between average daily MME and visits to multiple pharmacies/prescribers with any NMPOU and severity of use. This study demonstrates self-report clinical measures of substance use can be cross-walked to PDMP data and translated into clinically interpretable information.

