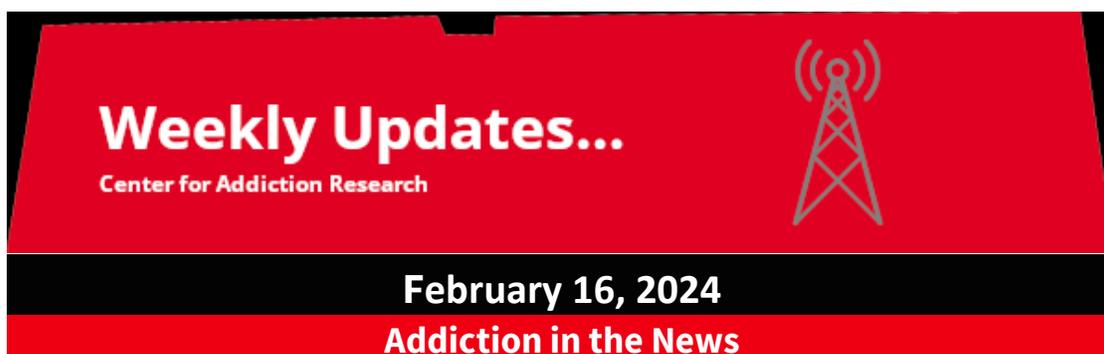


Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)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

UC tobacco addiction expert weighs in on new research reported by global media

Ashley Merianos, PhD, an assistant professor of human services, is proving herself a sought-after expert for media commentary on the toxicity of tobacco and the effects of tobacco related behaviors such as smoking and vaping. Merianos, a prolific tobacco researcher who is currently serving as a co-investigator on two U.S. National Institutes of Health research projects, was cited recently in the global news outlet Deutsche Welle, Germany's state-owned news organization. Merianos commented on potential flaws in a study (not her research) that showed vaping nicotine in pregnancy is not associated with any adverse effects in mothers or their babies. In the article, Merianos said the results needed to be... **(featuring CAR member, Dr. Ashley Merianos)**

Kentucky attorney general files lawsuit alleging Kroger pharmacies contributed to the opioid crisis

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman filed a lawsuit Monday against one of the nation's largest grocery chains, claiming its pharmacies helped fuel the state's deadly opioid addiction crisis. The lawsuit against the Kroger Co. says its more than 100 Kentucky pharmacies were responsible for over 11% of all opioid pills dispensed in the state between 2006 and 2019. It amounted to hundreds of millions of doses inundating Kentucky communities without reasonable safeguards, the suit said. "For more than a decade, Kroger flooded

Kentucky with an almost unthinkable number of opioid pills that directly led to addiction, pain and death,” Coleman said in a statement. The...

House committee approves bill that would ban tobacco use, vaping in Kentucky schools

FRANKFORT, Ky. — The House Education Committee approved a bill that would ban the use of tobacco and vapor products in Kentucky schools. House Bill 142 aims to enforce anti-vaping policies by requiring schools to take any tobacco or nicotine products from students. Schools would be required to discipline students who get caught again with those products. Supporters of the bill say it's not meant to get students in trouble, rather it looks to discourage harmful vaping. "It is speculated that more than 5.6 million youth will face premature death because of vaping according to the CDC and it's something we obviously need to take a firm stance on here in our great state of Kentucky. Maybe...

National News

Suicidal Thoughts Higher Among Students Who Use Drugs

A recent study found that high school students who smoke, drink, or use marijuana are more likely to suffer from suicidal thoughts, feel depressed, have psychotic episodes, and exhibit inattention or hyperactivity. Researchers also found that increases in psychiatric symptoms occurred even among teens with relatively low levels of use. The study, published in JAMA Pediatrics, consisted of nearly 15,000 high school students across the state of Massachusetts. “We sought to determine whether substance use was dose-dependently associated with various psychiatric symptoms in a large sample of high school students...

A closer look at cannabis use and binge eating

New research from Drexel University's Center for Weight, Eating and Lifestyle Science (WELL Center), examined how often people experiencing binge eating are also using cannabis recreationally, and whether patients who use cannabis experience more severe eating disorder symptoms or symptoms of struggling with mental health. While there has been a great deal of research on the impact of cannabis on eating habits, less is known about the effects of cannabis use on individuals with a binge eating disorder. Binge eating is the experience of feeling out of control when eating or unable to stop...

New study reveals dynamic impact of nicotine on brain regions responsible for reward and aversion

A new study led by researchers at the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine sheds light on the intricate interplay of brain regions involved in nicotine's effects on the human brain. The research, published in eNeuro, explores how nicotine influences key areas associated with reward and aversion, showcasing a nuanced relationship that varies based on dosage, sex and distinct brain regions. The medial habenula (MHb), a region known for regulating nicotine aversion, takes

center stage in the study. Researchers discovered that MHB activity experiences fluctuations, either heightened or diminished...

Tobacco use in pregnancy linked to neurocognitive deficits in offspring

Maternal tobacco use during pregnancy (MTDP) is associated with child neurocognitive deficits at ages nine to 12 years, according to a study published online Feb. 13 in JAMA Network Open. Troy B. Puga, from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, and colleagues examined whether MTDP is associated with child neurocognitive development in a cohort study involving children aged nine to 10 years at wave 1 (October 2016 to October 2018) and 11 to 12 years at wave 2 (August 2018 to January 2021) in the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study from 21 U.S. sites. The researchers found...

Smoking shown to have long-term effects on the immune system

Like other factors such as age, sex, and genetics, smoking has a major impact on immune responses. This is the finding recently made by a team of scientists at the Institut Pasteur using the Milieu Intérieur cohort of 1,000 healthy volunteers, established to understand variability in immune responses. In addition to its short-term impact on immunity, smoking also has long-term consequences. For many years after they have quit the habit, smokers are left with effects on some of their bodies' defense mechanisms acquired while smoking. These findings, which for the first time reveal a long-term memory of the effects...

Quitting smoking at any age brings big health benefits, fast: Study

People who quit smoking see major gains in life expectancy after just a few years, according to a new study by University of Toronto researchers at Unity Health Toronto. The study, published in NEJM Evidence, shows that smokers who quit smoking before age 40 can expect to live almost as long as those who never smoked. Those who quit at any age return close to never-smoker survival 10 years after quitting, and about half that benefit occurs within just three years. "Quitting smoking is ridiculously effective in reducing the risk of death, and people can reap those rewards remarkably quickly," said Prabhat Jha...

Rutgers researchers receive funding to study perceptions of a ban on menthol cigarettes

Researchers at Rutgers University have received more than \$7 million to study disinformation and marketing around a proposed federal ban on menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars—with a particular focus on how such information affects Black and Hispanic smokers. Kymberle Sterling, the associate director for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion at the Rutgers Institute for Nicotine and Tobacco Studies, will lead the two studies. The proposed federal ban on menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars was supposed to take effect last year, but in December was pushed off until at least March, dismaying public...

E-Cigs Show Some Benefit as Smoking Cessation Aid in Clinical Trial

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) helped people better stick to smoking cessation in the randomized controlled ESTxENDS trial. Participants smoking at least five tobacco cigarettes a day at baseline showed validated continuous abstinence from tobacco smoking at 6 months in 28.9% of cases after getting free e-cigarettes and counseling, which was significantly better than the 16.3% abstinence demonstrated by peers who received standard counseling and a voucher for any therapy (RR 1.77, 95% CI 1.43-2.20), reported Reto Auer, MD, of the University of Bern, Switzerland, and co-authors. Additionally, abstinence from...

Social media adverts impact vaping behaviors among young people, study shows

Viewing e-cigarette advertisements and content on social media—often endorsed by celebrities and social media influencers—is fueling the popularity of vaping among young users, according to a study from researchers at the University of York. The work is published in the journal PLOS Global Public Health. In their review, which included 11 research studies looking at social media networks such as Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram, the researchers found evidence that commonly used marketing strategies for e-cigarettes resulted in more users and more intentions to use the...

Study shows sense of smell is impacted by vaping

Sensory changes may be an unexpected side effect of vaping, new University of Otago research shows. The study, carried out in collaboration with the National Institute for Health Innovation and published in the journal Appetite, assessed the potential effects of vaping on the sense of taste and smell among young New Zealanders. Lead author Dr. Jessica McCormack, of the Department of Food Science, says results show non-vapers find "sweet" smells more pleasant than vapers. There was no difference for taste or "savory" smell. "Changes in smell and taste are often linked to dietary changes, so it..."

No Survival Benefit to Higher Intranasal Naloxone Dose

There was no difference in survival between recipients of 4-mg or 8-mg intranasal naloxone (Narcan) administered by law enforcement, according to data from New York state. A review of 354 naloxone administration reports from New York State Police from March 2022 to August 2023 showed that 99% of people who received the 8-mg dose and 99.2% of those who received the 4-mg dose survived (relative risk [RR] 0.81, 95% CI 0.07-8.99, P=0.86), reported Sharon Stancliff, MD, of the AIDS Institute at the New York State Department of Health, and colleagues. There were also no significant differences in number of...

Researchers find response to ketamine depends on opioid pathways, but varies by sex

Ketamine, increasingly popular as a treatment for depression and pain, is often prescribed as an alternative to addictive opioids. But the data has been mixed on whether ketamine's effects rely on similar brain pathways as opioids. New research by Stanford Medicine scientists suggests that the confusion may have to do with an overlooked factor—sex. In a study of rats, the researchers found that blocking opioid receptors in the brain extinguished the effects of ketamine—but only in male rats. Female rats' reaction to ketamine remained largely the same. "The main thing we're interested in is whether there...

Examining the ethical duality of using prescription drug monitoring programs in the fight against opioids

Saint Louis University's Liz Chiarello, Ph.D., associate professor of sociology, recently published an article in the *American Sociological Review*. The article explores pharmacists' use of prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) and the ethical and practical application of PDMPs in health care. Chiarello examined six states with various levels of resources dedicated to fighting the opioid crisis and studied how pharmacists in those states use PDMPs when filling prescriptions. "I started this project because I saw health care and law enforcement trying to work together to combat the opioid crisis,"...

Nitazenes Have Entered the Drug Scene. Now What?

Move over fentanyl! There's a new boogeyman in town. At least that's what you might be hearing from the news. And if you haven't already heard the word "nitazenes" then you can expect to soon. Nitazenes are a class of synthetic opioids, also known as the benzimidazole opioids, which have received more and more attention as they are being detected with increasing frequency in street drugs and overdoses. Media coverage has primarily focused on nitazenes being "more potent than fentanyl," and a cause for concern in our ongoing overdose crisis. Make no mistake, fentanyl continues to drive the...

Suicidality among individuals with substance use disorders increased in 2020: Study

Individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs) were significantly more likely to consider, plan and attempt suicide than those without SUDs in 2020, according to a new study by researchers at Penn State. Adolescents and women with SUDs were also more likely to experience suicidality—the term for ideating and planning suicide—than others. The findings, the researchers said, suggest improved remote and hybrid access to prevention interventions may be especially important in school settings. The study was published in *Substance Abuse: Research and Treatment*. Abenaa Jones, the Ann Atherton Hertzler...

CDC report finds teens use drugs — often alone — to ease stress and anxiety

Teenagers with suspected substance use problems say they turn to drugs because of a crushing need to relax and escape worries, according to research published Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The new findings follow reports of rising anxiety and depression among the nation's youth, including unprecedented levels of hopelessness. Because those conditions are often linked to substance use in adolescence, said Sarah Connolly, lead author of the new report and an epidemic intelligence service officer within the CDC's Division of Overdose Prevention, "it might make sense that..."

Oregon pioneered a radical drug policy. Now it's reconsidering.

Oregon voters passed the most liberal drug law in the country in November 2020, decriminalizing possession for small amounts of hard drugs. Under Ballot Measure 110, instead of arresting drug users, police now give them a citation and point them towards treatment. The law passed with 58% of the vote and also funneled hundreds of millions of dollars in cannabis tax revenue to fund new recovery programs. But more than three years later, the drug crisis in Oregon – like many other places battling the fentanyl crisis – has gotten worse. And that's prompted a fierce political debate in Oregon...

Doing Away With Needle Exchange Programs Won't Prevent Drug Use

A needle exchange program, also known as a syringe services program, is a harm reduction strategy that provides clean and sterile injecting equipment to those who inject drugs. At first glance, these programs may sound radical. But the reality is, individuals who are injecting or using drugs are going to do so regardless of whether they have access to clean injecting equipment. This is where the principle of harm reduction becomes important: these are evidence-based strategies for people who use drugs to prevent or limit the negative outcomes that may come from their drug use. The principle accepts...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[NOT-DA-23-054](#)

[Notice of Change to RFA-DA-23-053, "HEAL Initiative: Translating Research to Practice to End the Overdose Crisis \(R61/R33 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-DA-23-055](#)

[Notice of Change to RFA-DA-23-054, "HEAL Initiative: Translating Research to Practice to End the Overdose Crisis \(R33 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-AA-24-005](#)

[Request for Information \(RFI\): Innovative, Non-invasive Biosensing Technologies with High Accuracy and High Resolution Detection of Blood Alcohol Levels](#)

[NOT-NS-24-049](#)

[Notice of Change: Extension of PAR-21-163 Blueprint Neurotherapeutics Network \(BPN\): Biologic-based Drug Discovery and Development for Disorders of the Nervous System \(UG3/UH3\)](#)

[PAR-24-118](#)

[Advancing Learning Health Care Research in Outpatient Mental Health Treatment Settings \(R34 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[NOT-AG-23-079](#)

[Notice of Change to Key Dates Listed in PAR-24-092, "Multidisciplinary Studies of HIV/AIDS and Aging \(R21 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

[NOT-AG-23-081](#)

[Notice of Change to Key Dates Listed in PAR-24-091, "Multidisciplinary Studies of HIV/AIDS and Aging \(R01 Clinical Trial Optional\)"](#)

UC Foundation Funding Opportunities

Please contact Carol Russell at (513) 556-6169 or 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.

American Psychological Foundation Funds Studies of Serious Emotional Disturbance

Deadline: April 24, 2024

The American Psychological Foundation invites applications for the John and Polly Sparks Early Career Grant for Psychologists Investigating Serious Emotional Disturbance. Grants of up to \$22,000 will be awarded to early-career psychologists conducting research in early intervention and treatment for serious emotional disturbance in children. Applicants must be early-career psychologists with no more than 10 years of postdoctoral degrees from an accredited university. For more details, see the funder's website.

