

April 13, 2023



D.C. Update: NASADAD/APHSA Release Publications on Child Welfare and SUD Systems, Fentanyl Combined with Xylazine Designated as an Emerging Threat, April is Alcohol Awareness Month, and More.

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Meet the Member

Elliott Birckhead, BA, JD, SSA of West Virginia, Joins NASADAD Board of Directors as Director of Region III

We are excited to announce that Mr. Elliott Birckhead, SSA in West Virginia, is joining the NASADAD Board of Directors as Regional Director III. Congratulations Elliott!



Elliott Birckhead is the Deputy Commissioner of Programs and Policies for the West Virginia Department of Human Services, Bureau of Behavioral Health (BBH). Elliott joined the West Virginia BBH in February 2003 as the Division Director for the Division of Adult Mental Health and Community Rehabilitation Services. The mission of the BBH is to serve the people of West Virginia by working with strategic partners to advance access and quality of statewide substance use disorder and mental health services to empower each West Virginian to reach their potential.

Elliott completed his Bachelor' of Arts degree from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and his Juris Doctor from American University, Washington College of Law. The majority of his professional career has been dedicated to the expansion of mental health and substance use disorder services to help improve the health of individuals, families, and communities that are socially and systematically disenfranchised.

Throughout his work, Elliott has been committed to developing and enhancing the ability to reach and effectively serve consumers and families with mental health, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Welcome Elliott!

NASADAD/APHSA Release Publications on Improving Collaboration Between the Child Welfare and Alcohol and Other Drug Systems



Research has shown that if left untreated, parental substance use disorders (SUD) can have a negative impact on the entire family. According to a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) study published in 2017, approximately 1 in 8 children in the United States lived with a parent who had a past year SUD. While many children who are exposed to parental substance misuse will not experience maltreatment, they are at higher risk of maltreatment and child welfare involvement and are twice as likely to develop an SUD themselves. Intentional planning and coordination between state alcohol and other drug (AOD) and child welfare agencies are essential to prevent the negative consequences that SUD can have on families and prevent children from entering the foster care system.

To strengthen the collaboration and relationship between these agencies, the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) launched a workgroup of state child welfare and AOD leaders. Through a series of meetings conducted throughout 2022, agency leadership worked together to understand the barriers and opportunities to align systems and improve services for shared populations. Those conversations initiated the development of foundational resources for both agencies that outlined shared outcome measures and examples of existing collaborations between the two systems. Guided by the workgroup, APHSA and NASADAD worked together to create two resources for AOD and child welfare agencies, as well as other organizations that work with child welfare-involved families impacted by substance use:

- [Shared Outcomes for Child Welfare and Substance Use Disorder Systems](#) - This document aims to provide child welfare and AOD systems with guidance to start and deepen conversations by enabling state agencies to jointly assess the services offered to child welfare-involved families impacted by substance use.
- [Collaborative Programs Between Child Welfare and Substance Use Disorder Systems](#) - This document provides state agencies with existing models of collaboration between child welfare and AOD agencies along with court systems.

Please email Caroline Halsted (chalsted@nasadad.org) with any questions.

White House Happenings

End of COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

On Monday, April 10, 2023, President Joseph Biden signed into law [H.J. Res. 7](#), which terminated the national emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) was first declared on January 31, 2020, and the national emergency was first declared on March 13, 2020.

Biden-Harris Administration Designates Fentanyl Combined with Xylazine as an Emerging Threat to the United States

Yesterday, Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), designated fentanyl adulterated or associated with xylazine as an emerging threat to the United States. According to the press release, “Xylazine is a non-opioid tranquilizer approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for veterinary use but not human use. This designation comes after careful review of the impact of xylazine on the opioid crisis, including its growing role in overdose deaths in every region of the United States.” To read more, visit the press release [here](#).

ONDCP Launches Youth Awareness Campaign Against Synthetic Drugs



The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), in collaboration with the Ad Council, recently launched the first phase of a new Youth Awareness Campaign to “...educate young people on the dangers of fentanyl and life-saving effects of Naloxone.” This campaign builds on the Ad Council’s existing [Real Deal on Fentanyl](#) platform, which highlights “...the importance of carrying Naloxone and encourage[s] young people to learn how to use and find Naloxone in their communities.” The launch of this campaign follows the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) [recent approval of the first over-the-counter Naloxone spray](#).

Capitol Hill Happenings

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health Hearing on “Combatting a Crisis: Providing Veterans Access to Life-saving Substance Abuse Disorder Treatment”

On April 18, 2023, The House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health is hosting a hearing on [Combatting a Crisis: Providing Veterans Access to Life-saving Substance Abuse Disorder Treatment](#). The hearing will begin around noon after the Committee considers other legislation in the morning.

Around the Agencies

Updated SAMHSA 988 Toolkit Released

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) 988 Lifeline team has updated the [988 Partner Toolkit](#) to include new shareables. SAMHSA has updated the 988 Partner Toolkit resources specifically to “...focus on youth and adult suicide warning signs, how to be a lifeline, self-care practices, and the reasons and ways to reach out for help.” The updated Toolkit also includes new print materials, available in the [SAMHSA store](#).



DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has marked Saturday, April 22, 2023, as the next [National Prescription Drug Take Back Day](#). Take Back Day is a chance for individuals to safely dispose of unneeded and unwanted medications. Drop-off sites will be open from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and will collect tablets, capsules, patches, and other solid forms of prescription drugs. To find a collection site near you, visit the DEA’s website [here](#).



New SAMHSA Funding Opportunity: Behavioral Health Partnership for Early Diversion of Adults and Youth

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announced an \$8 million funding opportunity for the [Behavioral Health Partnership for Early Diversion of Adults and Youth](#). This project is designed to “...establish or expand programs that divert adults and youth with a mental illness or a co-occurring disorder (COD) from the criminal or juvenile justice system to community-based mental health and substance use disorder services (SUD) and other supports prior to arrest and booking.”

This program will offer 25 awards of up to \$300,000 per year per award, for up to five years. Applications are due June 9th, 2023.

Research Round-Up

Study Finds Patients Treated with Buprenorphine in EDs are More Likely to Continue After Discharge

A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) found that patients treated with buprenorphine in emergency departments (ED) for opioid use disorder (OUD) were more likely to continue using buprenorphine after discharge. The study of Medicaid-enrolled adults with an OUD ED encounter found that “...the buprenorphine treatment Opioid Hospital Quality Improvement Program (O-HQIP) pathway was associated with significantly increased prescription fills for buprenorphine within 30 days of discharge.” According to the authors, these findings suggest that “...statewide incentive programs may effectively improve outcomes for patients with opioid use disorder.” The JAMA article can be accessed in full [here](#).

Data Shows Overdose is Now A Leading Cause of Death During or Shortly After Pregnancy

Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), published a [blog post](#) summarizing the latest research on the danger of substance use during and shortly after pregnancy for pregnant and postpartum women (PPW). This emerging data reveals that overdose is now a leading cause of death during or shortly after pregnancy. According to a [study by researchers at Columbia University](#), “...drug overdose deaths among pregnant and postpartum people increased by 81% between 2017 and 2020.” [2022 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) found that “...deaths related to mental health conditions, including substance use disorders, account for 23% of deaths during pregnancy or in the year following it.” These findings reveal the importance of ensuring access to treatment for pregnant and postpartum people.

Webinars to Watch

FDA Virtual Workshop: Considerations for Buprenorphine Initiation and Maintenance Care



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is holding a two-day virtual workshop on [Considerations for Buprenorphine Initiation and Maintenance Care](#). The meeting aims to “...explore real-world experiences and scientific evidence for buprenorphine initiation strategies as well as medication dosing and management during continued treatment across different care settings.” This no-cost workshop will be offered on May 10 from 1:00 p.m.-4:45 p.m. (ET) and May 11 from 1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. (ET) and will feature “...people who use drugs, their families and community, harm reduction programs, health professionals from inpatient and outpatient settings, academic researchers, and federal partners.” [Registration](#) is required for both sessions.

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