

September 17, 2026



The D.C. Update

HHS awards \$77M for SUD services, CoE-PHI: privacy basics for frontline staff training, federal government funded at current appropriations levels through December, and more

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Meet the Member

Paula Brown, NPN Coordinator for Ky.

Paula Brown is a certified prevention specialist who serves as the Prevention and Promotion Program Manager in the Kentucky (Ky.) Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Division of Substance Use Disorder. Ms. Brown also currently serves as the National Prevention Network (NPN) Coordinator for Ky. She oversees the prevention component of the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services (SUPTRS) Block Grant along with discretionary prevention grants. In addition, her team collaborates with Ky.'s 14 Regional Prevention Centers to support the delivery and enhancement of prevention services statewide.



Paula has over 20 years of experience in prevention, beginning her career at a regional prevention center in western Ky., where she served as a Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant Coordinator and later became the center's Director. In 2019, she joined the Division of Substance Use Disorder as the State Liaison to the regional prevention centers, before shifting to the Program Manager role in 2022. Paula has served on the Kentucky Certification Board for Prevention Professionals (KCBPP) and the Kentucky Prevention Network Board. She was named the KCBPP Certified Prevention Specialist of the Year in 2022 and the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium 2023 Prevention Professional of the Year.

NASADAD News



New Staff: Antony Lin, Public Policy Intern

NASADAD gains a new addition in Antony Lin as incoming Public Policy Intern. Mr. Lin will support the Executive Director, Robert Morrison, on legislative and regulatory matters related to substance use disorders and assist with congressional/stakeholder engagement. He is currently a Master of Public Policy student at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy. Antony completed his undergraduate studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, between 2020-22, earning a Bachelor of Science in Anthropology as well as his Master of Public Health in Chronic Disease Epidemiology at the Yale School of Public

Health in 2023-25. His experience spans working at both the site and sponsor levels of clinical trials as well as in pediatrics and oncology research.

He is preceded by Morgan Rapsky, who departed as of last month: she now serves as Legislative Intern in the office of Madeleine Dean, representing Pennsylvania's 4th congressional district in the US House of Representatives. NASADAD extends great thanks to Ms. Rapsky for her numerous contributions and wishes her the best of luck in her endeavors.

White House Happenings



White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Releases Drug Threat Notice on Deadly Fentanyl Analogues

On September 15th, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) released a Drug Threat Notice to warn the public about the deadly threat posed by fentanyl analogues due to their increasing prevalence and potency. Pursuant to its authority to monitor evolving and emerging drug threats, ONDCP assesses that carfentanil, fluorofentanyl, and methyلفentanyl currently represent the greatest threat from fentanyl analogues to the American people due to their lethality and prevalence across the nation.

View the Drug Threat Notice [here](#).

Capitol Hill Happenings



Congress approves, President signs, Continuing Resolution (CR) funding federal government through December 11th, 2026

On Tuesday, September 1st, the U.S. House of Representatives approved, by a vote of 370-48, a stop gap funding measure or Continuing Resolution (H.R. 6500) to fund the federal government at current appropriations levels through December 11th, 2026. The Senate passed the same bill by a vote of 90-6 on August 8th. President Trump signed the measure on September 2nd. Congress now has more time to iron out FY 2027 appropriations bills given that the 12 annual funding measures remain unfinished. This includes the bill funding NASADAD priority programs within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and other programs.

Senate hearing on nomination of Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use

On Wednesday, September 15, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing to consider Presidential nominees for key positions

within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) – including Dr. Timothy Westlake, nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use; Chris Klomp, nominee to serve as Deputy Secretary of HHS; and Dr. Nicole Saphier, nominee to serve as Surgeon General. The Chairman of the Senate HELP Committee is Dr. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and the Ranking Member is Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). At this point, no date has been set by the Committee for a vote. To view the hearing, please click [here](#).

Around the Agencies

SAMHSA: Suicide Prevention Awareness Month is here



September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, dedicated to reducing stigma, promoting hope, and connecting people with lifesaving support resources like the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. This annual observance highlights suicide warning signs, encourages open discussions about mental health and substance use disorders (SUDs), and connects individuals to evidence-based treatment.

To support these efforts, SAMHSA has released the **2026 Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Toolkit**, containing messaging, social media materials, and additional suicide prevention resources; and it can be accessed [here](#).

Additional resources within SAMHSA's Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) can be found [here](#).



SAMHSA holds morning kickoff event for National Recovery Month

On Thursday, September 3rd, Robert Morrison, NASADAD Executive Director, attended a SAMHSA-sponsored kickoff event at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in Washington, D.C. Featured speakers included Dr. Timothy Westlake, SAMHSA Chief of Staff and nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Tonja Myles, Director of the Office of Recovery, and others.

In addition, the event included a series of panel discussions on peer support communities, treating addiction as a chronic disease, recovery-friendly workplaces, and supporting successful transitions back to communities. National Recovery Month is an opportunity to celebrate national efforts toward recovery, recognize those who make recovery possible, and invite every American to be part of building recovery-ready communities.

SAMHSA's **National Recovery Month Toolkit** can be accessed [here](#).

Faces & Voices of Recovery Luncheon celebrates Joanna Champney, DE, as 2026 Ramstad-Kennedy Award winner

On September 3rd, Robert Morrison attended a luncheon convened by Faces and Voices of Recovery where leaders of the field gathered to continue the Recovery Month kickoff celebration. During the program, it was announced that **Joanna Champney, State Director in Delaware (Del.), won the 2026 Ramstad-Kennedy Award**. The award is named after the late Rep. Jim Ramstad and former Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-R.I.) and presented to a State director for outstanding work supporting recovery in general, and

Recovery Month in particular. The event featured remarks from Rep. Paul Tonko (D-N.Y.), Co-Chair of the Addiction Treatment and Recovery Caucus, Monty Burks, HHS Office of Faith; Dr. Roneet Lev, Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), and others. Special thanks to Patty McCarthy and Faces & Voices of Recovery for hosting the luncheon.

Congratulations to Joanna Champney for the Ramstad-Kennedy Award.



Faces & Voices of Recovery hosting virtual 25th Anniversary Recovery Leadership Summit

Join Faces & Voices of Recovery for the 25th Anniversary Recovery Leadership Summit, a national gathering taking place online October 6-8, 2026. This special milestone event will bring together recovery leaders, policymakers, state and federal agencies, practitioners, advocates, and community members from across the country to celebrate 25 years of advancing recovery, elevating lived experience, and strengthening recovery support nationwide. Participants will reflect on the progress of the recovery movement, explore emerging opportunities and challenges, and help shape the future of recovery advocacy and leadership.



View the agenda, meet the speakers, and register today at Recovery Leadership Summit [here](#).



CoE-PHI: Privacy basics for frontline staff

The CoE-PHI (Center for Excellence in Protected Health Information) is offering a **free 15–20-minute interactive eLearning module** to help behavioral health professionals apply federal privacy regulations governing mental health/substance use treatment information.

Through real-world case studies, lessons, and knowledge checks, learners may better understand sharing Protected Health Information (PHI) in compliance with 42 CFR Part 2 within their organization and communicating PHI appropriately outside their organization.

This eLearning module may be accessed [here](#).

CoE-PHI: Application to SBIRT services

The CoE-PHI (Center for Excellence in Protected Health Information) is offering a **free 15–20-minute interactive eLearning module** to help substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers and other providers determine whether records related to their Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) services are protected by the federal confidentiality law and regulations for SUD treatment records, 42 USC § 290dd-2 and 42 CFR Part 2.

This eLearning module may be accessed [here](#).

CoE-PHI: Part 2's Medical Emergency Exception



The Center of Excellence for Protected Information (COE-PHI), a technical assistance center funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is announcing an e-learning module titled “Part 2’s Medical Emergency Exception.” As noted by COE-PHI, the module “...is designed to help professionals who provide or administer substance use disorder related services identify what constitutes and emergency, and describes who may receive records pursuant to the medical emergency exception under Part 2. This eLearning module may be accessed here. To learn more about the COE-PHI, please visit [here](#).

HHS: \$77M awarded to strengthen substance use services

The HHS, through SAMHSA, announced on Overdose Awareness Day that it awarded \$77M in new grant funding to strengthen substance use prevention, treatment and recovery, community mental health, suicide prevention, and crisis services. The announcement came as National Substance Use Primary Prevention Month closed out, with more than \$22M of the funding supporting critical substance use prevention efforts in communities.

An in-depth breakdown of awards announced can be found [here](#).



HHS: \$380M awarded to strengthen America's behavioral health system on 988 Day

The HHS, through SAMHSA, announced on 988 Day, September 8th, \$383.4M in grants awarded to strengthen behavioral health treatment, prevention, and crisis response nationwide. Of that funding, \$252M will support the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, suicide prevention, and mobile crisis services.

An in-depth breakdown of awards announced can be found [here](#).



CDC: Launch of Overdose Prevention Data Channel

CDC's newest resource, the **Overdose Prevention Data Channel (OPDC)**, provides timely data on overdose trends across the country in service of this recognition. As drug overdose patterns continue to evolve nationally, the OPDC simplifies understanding trends via integration of information from existing dashboards, such as the [State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System](#) (SUDORS), [Drug Overdose Surveillance and Epidemiology Syndromic Surveillance System](#) (DOSE), and the [National Vital Statistics System](#) (NVSS).

The OPDC enables users to...

- Explore national and state-level trends for fatal and nonfatal overdoses,
- Access data from multiple CDC surveillance systems in one place,
- Find evidence-based prevention strategies,
- Connect to CDC programs, tools, and resources to support your prevention and response efforts, and
- Discover how CDC-funded programs support communities.

The OPDC can be accessed [here](#), and the CDC's updated IOAD partner toolkit can be found [here](#).



SAMHSA: Ongoing commitment to help States connect people to SUD treatment and recovery support services

On August 31st, SAMHSA released a blog post highlighting approaches that help close the gap and connect people to SUD treatment and recovery support services where they need them following SAMHSA's national Coordinated Overdose

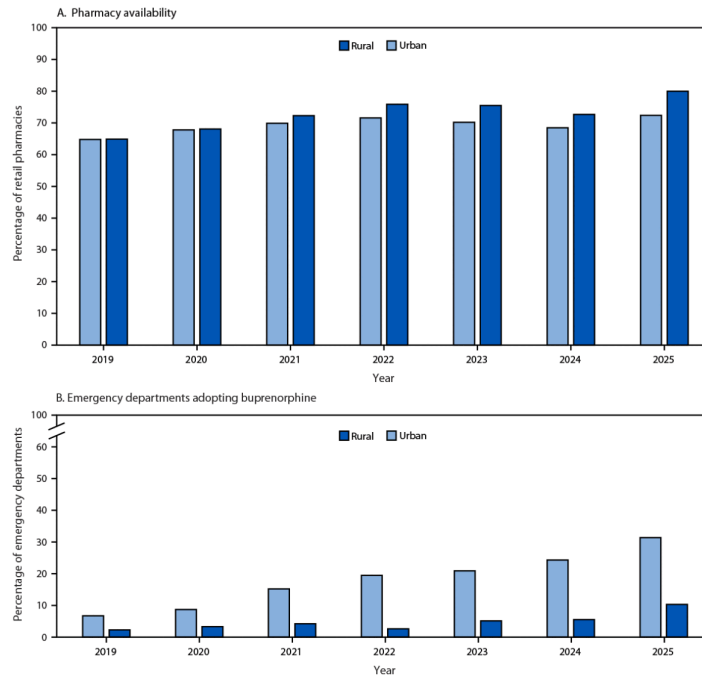
Response Treatment meeting in Bethesda, Md., in partnership with the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) on August 19th and 20th.

Partners across the country joined healthcare and emergency response leaders, community-based and recovery organizations, researchers, evaluators, and technical assistance providers to share approaches and lessons from across the country. Participants shared behavioral health models employed by states, communities, and tribal

entities to connect people with substance use disorders (SUDs) throughout the nation to localized treatment and recovery support services.

The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

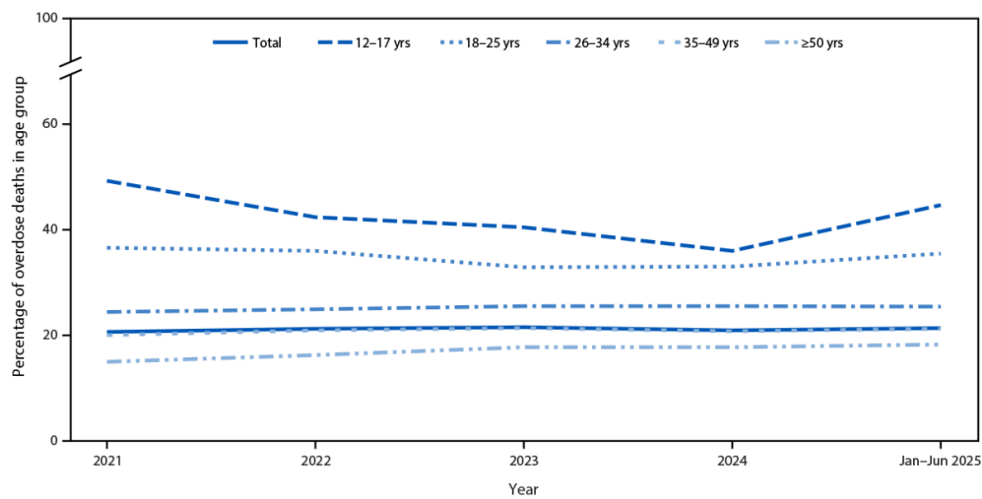
Research Roundup



CDC: Buprenorphine Dispensed by Pharmacies and Administered in Emergency Departments in Urban and Rural Areas - United States, 2019-2025

In 2024, a total of 54,045 persons died from opioid-involved drug overdoses in the United States; buprenorphine reduces opioid use and related deaths but remains underused. Buprenorphine dispensing by pharmacies increased during 2019–2021, particularly in rural counties, before declining through 2025, though rates remained higher in rural than in urban counties. Emergency department (ED) adoption and administration of buprenorphine for opioid use disorder or nonfatal opioid overdoses also increased but remained consistently lower in rural counties. Expanding access to buprenorphine in urban and rural counties — **including increasing the number of prescriptions, improving availability in pharmacies, supporting ED-based treatment, and sustaining telehealth flexibilities** — could improve treatment access and reduce overdose risk.

Read more [here](#).



CDC: Cannabis Detection Among Overdose Deaths - United States, 2021-2025

In the United States, little is known about the frequency of cannabis detection in drug overdose deaths or age distribution of persons who died of an overdose with cannabis detected. During January 2021–June 2025, cannabis was detected in 21.0% of overdose deaths; the percentage was stable over time. Cannabis was listed as causing death in 0.8% of overdose deaths. Percentages of deaths with cannabis detected were highest among adolescents aged 12–17 years and decreased with increasing age. **Community-based approaches to preventing and reducing youth cannabis use** have the potential to improve the health of youths now and as they move into adulthood.

Read more [here](#).

Webinars to Watch



UW ADAI: Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome

The University of Washington's (UW's) Addictions, Drug & Alcohol Institute (ADAI) is hosting a no-cost symposium with in-person and virtual attendance options in September.

Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome

Friday, September 18th @ 12:00 – 7:00 PM ET

In-Person Location: [UW Tower Auditorium](#) (Seattle, Wash.)

Presented by researchers and speakers from across the country

Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS) is recognized as a cluster of symptoms like severe abdominal pain, nausea, retching, and relentless vomiting associated with heavy cannabis use. Even as CHS gains visibility, providers may not have a clear understanding or guidance. This symposium will examine CHS prevalence in acute care settings, health education, and policy recommendations for CHS prevention.

Register [here](#).



Georgetown University: M.S. in Addiction Policy and Practice

The School of Health at Georgetown University is hosting a free informational session on its M.S. in Addiction Policy and Practice program.

M.S. in Addiction Policy and Practice Informational Session

Monday, September 21st @ 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Presented by Helena Chaves

The session is designed to discuss Georgetown University's Master's Program in Addiction Policy and Practice. This session is hosted in collaboration with Hoyas for Recovery (HFR), a Georgetown student group, represented by Helena Chaves, a current ADPP student and HFR's Programs Administrator.

Register [here](#).



ISSUP: Substance Use and Supply Control Workforce

ISSUP (International Society of Substance Use Professionals) is hosting a no-cost virtual conference in lieu of the now-cancelled ISSUP 2026 Conference.

Connecting Sectors, Creating Impact: A United Response on Drugs

Tuesday & Wednesday, September 22nd - 23rd @ 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM ET

Presented by researchers and speakers around the world

This two-day virtual conference will bring together international experts, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to explore key issues related to the substance use and supply control workforce. Through a series of expert panel discussions, participants will examine current challenges, innovative approaches, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration across sectors involved in reducing substance use and drug supply.

Register [here](#).

Deconstructing Stigma

DS: Addiction & Mental Health

McLean Hospital's Deconstructing Stigma (DS) initiative is hosting one no-cost virtual session in September.

Tackling Addiction With Mental Health in Mind

Thursday, September 24th @ 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET

Presented by Rocco Iannucci, MD

Mental health challenges often intersect with substance use, complicating diagnosis and treatment. Integrated care models may improve outcomes for individuals with co-occurring disorders; and clinicians, caregivers, and communities benefit from learning strategies that support whole-person recovery and long-term well-being.

Register [here](#).

Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation: Motivational Interviewing

The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation is hosting a no-cost webinar in September.

Motivational Interviewing Foundations and Application in Youth Settings

Thursday, September 24th @ 1:00 - 2:00 PM ET

Presented by Pam Pietruszewski; Holly Books, MA, LDC & Jake Lewis

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative, person-centered approach to conversations aiming to strengthen an individual's own motivation and commitment to change and growth. This session will enable participants to gain a deeper understanding of what MI is and how it may work for youth populations, understand how MI can be applied in different settings and put into practice, and learn how MI is integrated in The ASAM Criteria, Fourth Edition, Volume 2: Adolescents and Transition-Aged Youth.

Register [here](#).



CAI: Expanding Nicotine Recovery Supports

CAI's (Caticelli Associates Inc.) National Center of Excellence for Tobacco Recovery is hosting one no-cost virtual webinar in September.

Iowa's Peer-Driven Tobacco-Free Recovery

Tuesday, September 29th @ 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Presented by Tabetha Gerdner & Cody Crawford, CPM

An NIH-funded study found that quitting cigarette smoking was associated with 42% greater odds of recovery from another substance use disorder. Quitting is also associated with improvements in anxiety, depression, stress, mood, and quality of life. Hear how Iowa brought together substance use, mental health, tobacco control, recovery organizations, and peers to put this into practice through recovery community centers and point-of-care nicotine replacement therapy (NRT).

Register [here](#).



NAADAC: Atypical Intoxicants & Transforming Documentation

NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, is hosting one upcoming no-cost webinar this month.

Transforming Documentation: From Pitfalls to Best Practices

Wednesday, September 30th @ 12:00 – 1:30 PM ET

Presented by Myia Papper, LMHC, NCC

Clinical documentation often determines whether patients receive the necessary treatment or face costly denials. This webinar offers practical strategies to avoid common pitfalls and effectively demonstrate medical necessity through narrative techniques that bolster individualized, measurable, and clinically sound notes. Attendees will leave with tools to improve compliance, secure authorizations, and support patient-centered care.

Register [here](#).

Thank you for reading.

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