

January 17, 2019



D.C. Update: Capitol Hill happenings, upcoming webinars, and more

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Capitol Hill Happenings



House Democrats urge leadership to prioritize the opioid crisis in the 116th Congress

On January 9th, 63 Democratic members of Congress, led by Representatives Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Annie Kuster (D-NH), and Donald Norcross (D-NJ), submitted a [letter](#) to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) urging them to prioritize the opioid crisis in the 116th Congress. The letter states, "While Congress passed

several bills to increase access to medication-assisted treatment, support research efforts, and expand availability of naloxone, many of our states are seeing an increase in overdose death rates." The letter also notes that, "Dedicated staff across House committees capable of analyzing both the larger federal need and specifics from states and districts is necessary at this point."

Around the Agencies

HHS releases draft report on pain management best practices

The Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) [Pain Management Best Practices Task Force](#), chaired by Dr. Vanita Singh, recently released its [Draft Report on Pain Management Best Practices: Updates, Gaps, Inconsistencies, and Recommendations](#). Some of the key concepts included in the recommendations are that pain management should be balanced and individualized, using a multidisciplinary approach; it's important to address access to care and drug shortages; stigma continues to be a major barrier to treatment; more research is required to develop a better understanding of pain and its treatment; and more. The draft report describes preliminary recommendations of the Task Force that will be finalized and submitted to Congress later in the year, following a 90-day [public comment](#) period. The public comment period closes on April 1, 2019.

CDC releases Field Epidemiology Manual

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in partnership with the CDC Foundation and Oxford University Press, has published [The CDC Field Epidemiology Manual](#). The manual serves as a guide to investigating acute public health events in real-time. The Manual, which was written by CDC and other public health agency experts, offers current and field-tested guidance for an outbreak investigation—from identification to intervention. The Manual includes the core elements of field work, such as:

- Recommendations and guidance for using new tools in field investigations.
- Tips for investigating major types of problems in multiple settings, including outbreaks in healthcare and community care; outbreaks of violence, suicide, and other forms of injury; multinational outbreaks; and suspected biologic or toxic agents.
- Case study examples of lessons learned from recent field investigations.

News from NASADAD

[NASADAD submits comments to CMS on Medicare bundled episode of care reimbursement for](#)

medication-assisted treatment in OTPs

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors recently sent a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in response to their [request for information](#) on Medicare Payment for Certain Services Furnished by Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs). In the letter, we note our strong support for adding coverage for OTP care under Medicare, and understand CMS' interest in exploring reimbursement through bundled payments. We note, however, that the State alcohol and other drug agencies are concerned that a Medicare bundled episode reimbursement method does not adequately consider the chronic nature of OUD and complex recovery needs of the Medicare population. The letter highlights that an OTP "bundled episode of care" reimbursement approach should recognize that:

- OTP care episodes have vastly disparate durations of care, and many last significantly longer than a year;
- OTP patients that terminate care often re-enter care, possibly at a different provider; and
- The intensity and cost of OTP services are highest at initiation, and progressively decline.

News from the States

Lori Criss nominated as Director of Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Governor of Ohio, Mike DeWine, has announced the nomination of Lori Criss to serve as the new director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS). Lori Criss, who currently serves as chief executive officer of the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers, has extensive experience in policy related to recovery housing, opioid addiction, and integrated physical and behavioral health care. She is an active member of the recovery community, including sitting on the National Alliance of Recovery Residences (NARR), an organization dedicated to supporting individuals in recovery from substance use disorders.



Stakeholder Stories



Partnership for Drug-Free Kids merges with Center on Addiction

The Center on Addiction and the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids have announced that they are merging under the name [Center on Addiction](#). The Center on Addiction has a history of focusing on health care research and implementation, evaluation services, and policy and advocacy analysis, while the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids has focused on raising awareness

of substance use. As described in a [press release](#), the merger combines research, policy, media, direct-to-family resources and services, as well as communications expertise. The organization aims to empower families to support loved ones, advance effective addiction care, and shape public policies that prevent and treat addiction as a public health issue.

Upcoming Events

SAMHSA Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center webinar on Responding to Opioid Misuse in Indian Country

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Tribal Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Center, in collaboration with the Great Lakes Intertribal Council is hosting a [webinar](#), Responding to Opioid Misuse in Indian Country: Reviewing the Healthcare Model of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. In order to enhance tribal learning and sharing, discussants will review a Michigan tribal healthcare model. This webinar is the first in a series that serves as a virtual follow up to the GLITC SAMHSA collaborative Region 5 Opioid Summit that was held in August 2018. The goal of the series is to share tribal-led prevention success stories, promote wellness discussions, and share tribal lessons learned. The webinar will be held on January 23 from 2:00-3:30 pm EST.

NIH HEAL Initiative technical assistance webinar

In April 2018, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) launched the [HEAL \(Helping to End](#)

[Addiction Long-term\) Initiative](#), a trans-agency effort to speed scientific solutions to stem the national opioid public health crisis. A [technical assistance webinar](#) is scheduled to assist potential applicants to the prevention-specific HEAL initiatives. The intent of this pre-application webinar is to provide an overview of the HEAL Prevention funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) and to address general questions from potential applicants.

Attendees are encouraged to register for the webinar in advance. The webinar is optional and not required for application submission. Following the webinar, NIDA will post the slides that are presented.

The webinar will be held on January 17, 2019 from 12:30 - 2:00 pm EST.

Please click on the links below to see the full announcements and instructions for the initiatives that will be covered during the webinar:

- [Coordinating Center to Support NIDA Preventing Opioid Use Disorder in Older Adolescents and Young Adults \(ages 16–30\) Initiative](#) (U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)
- [Preventing Opioid Use Disorder in Older Adolescents and Young Adults \(ages 16–30\)](#) (UG3/UH3 Clinical Trial Required)

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week to be held January 22-27, 2019

The [National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week \(NDAFW\)](#), sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) will be held from January 22-27, 2019. NDAFW provides an opportunity for youth to learn the facts about drugs and alcohol and engage with addiction experts. Local school and community events can be registered in order to receive support from NIDA staff.

