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D.C. Update: House Energy and Commerce Committee advances bill to ban flavored tobacco products, study finds association between parental marijuana use and offspring substance use, and more



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Meet the Member

Valerie Mielke, Region II Director

Valerie Mielke, who serves as Regional Director for Region II on the NASADAD Board of Directors, is the Assistant Commissioner for the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) in the Department of Human Services and is the Single State Authority (SSA) for mental health and substance use disorders. The Division is responsible for regulating, monitoring, planning and funding substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery support services, and is also responsible for the coordination, administration, management, and supervision of the community public mental health system. Ms. Mielke holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Fairfield University and a Master of Social Work degree from Rutgers University. Valerie also currently serves as President on the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors' (NASMHPD) Board of Directors. Valerie also serves as Co-Lead of the NASMHPD Housing Task Force.



Capitol Hill Happenings

House Energy and Commerce Committee advances bill banning flavored tobacco products

The [House Committee on Energy and Commerce \(E&C\)](#) recently advanced a bill that would prohibit flavored tobacco products. The *Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019*, sponsored by Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), includes provisions related to: cigarette graphic health warnings; advertising and sales parity for all deemed tobacco products; reducing child and adolescent nicotine addiction; fees applicable to all tobacco products; regulation of products containing synthetic nicotine; and advertising of tobacco products. Notably, the bill would ban the sale of tobacco products flavored with fruit and candy additives, as well as mint and menthol, except if a manufacturer provided evidence that the

product would help cigarette smokers quit and not attract new smokers.

The Committee, led by Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Greg Walden (R-OR), approved the bill, with 27 members voting in favor, including one Republican. Twenty-four members opposed the bill, including three Democrats. During the markup of the bill, several Democratic members expressed concern that a ban on menthol products would disproportionately affect communities of color because prevalence data show that the majority of African Americans who smoke use menthol cigarettes.

Earlier this year, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP), led by Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty Murray (D-WA) passed legislation to raise the age of legal tobacco access to 21.



Around the Agencies

AHRQ releases compendium of health systems across the country

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), in partnership with Mathematica, recently released their [Compendium of U.S. Health Systems for](#)

[2018](#). The compendium is a database that links health systems to affiliated hospitals and physician group practices and tracks changes in these systems over time. As described in the announcement, stakeholders can use the compendium to better understand how health systems promote evidence-based systems and patient-centered care.

Research Roundup

Study finds association between parental marijuana use and offspring substance use

A [study](#) recently published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) examined the association between parental marijuana use and offspring engaging in substance misuse. The paper was written by Bertha K. Madras, Beth Han, Wilson M. Compton, Christopher M. Jones, Elizabeth I. Lopez, and Dr. Elinore F. McCance-Katz, who serves as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use. The study used data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) and determined that there was a substantial prevalence of marijuana use among parents living with children aged 12 to 30 years. Results of the study indicated that there was an association between parental marijuana use and an increased risk of past-year marijuana, tobacco, alcohol, and opioid misuse among both adolescent and young adult offspring. The authors of the study concluded that the prevention of multigenerational substance use should be a national priority.

In the News

Trust for America's Health releases datasets on syringe service programs and tobacco pricing strategies

Trust for America's Health (TFAH), in collaboration with the Center for Public Health Law Research at Temple University's Beasley School of Law, recently released two datasets as part of their [Promoting Health and Cost Control in States Initiative](#). The project offers States

policy options that aim to improve community health, with the first two datasets covering [syringe service program \(SSP\) laws](#) and [tobacco pricing strategies](#). The syringe service dataset includes an interactive map that presents State-level statutes and regulations, methods of authorization for SSPs, requirements for the establishment of SSPs, types of services provided, drug paraphernalia possession laws, and whether an SSP is operating in the State. The second dataset on tobacco pricing strategies also includes an interactive map that examines the pricing strategies used by each State, including how the tax funds are allocated.

ISSUE REPORT

Promoting Health and Cost Control in States:

How States Can Improve Community Health & Well-being Through Policy Change



Blog post discusses the need for specific strategies to treat adolescents and young adults with OUD

An [article](#) recently published on the Health Affairs Blog discusses the need for specific strategies to address the needs of adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with opioid use disorder (OUD). The blog post notes that effective strategies exist to prevent and treat OUD in adolescents: screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT); medication-assisted treatment (MAT); behavioral therapy; and family-centered approaches. However, authors state that barriers in the healthcare system prevent many from accessing those services. The blog post also summarizes national and State strategies that could be tailored to the needs of teens and young adults including designing and implementing effective models of care to prevent and treat OUD in AYAs; cover medically appropriate services and reduce barriers to treatment; use quality measures specific to AYAs; develop alternative payment models that address opioid-related harm in AYAs; implement reforms to reach AYAs where they learn and live; and enhance addiction care coordination and data integration systems for AYAs.

NASHP releases brief on State Medicaid agencies' use of non-licensed SUD workforce

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) recently released a [brief](#) that addresses how State Medicaid agencies are managing a shortage of substance use disorder (SUD) professionals. In response to this shortage, State agencies are developing a workforce of non-licensed treatment and support providers that include peers, counselors, and other qualified staff. The brief includes a comprehensive review of how Medicaid agencies reimburse for SUD services provided by non-licensed, non-master's level workforce; what services they provide and in what settings; and State education, training, and supervision requirements for non-licensed staff.



Upcoming Events

Truth Initiative to hold webinar on digital cessation programs

The Truth Initiative announced an upcoming webinar that will cover digital smoking cessation programs. As described in the announcement, experts in tobacco cessation and community health will discuss how digital cessation programs, an evidence-based quitting method, provides support and promising results. The webinar will

also examine how businesses can play in role in helping their employees to quit using tobacco products. Panelists for the webinar include Dr. Corrine Graffunder, Director at the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Dr. Amanda Graham, Chief of Innovations with the Truth Initiative; Dr. Michael Burke of the Mayo Clinic's Nicotine Dependence Center; Dr. David Price, Director of Mission Services/Medical Ethics at Mercy Medical Center; and Jennifer Gendron, Head of Development and Innovations at the Truth Initiative. The webinar will be held on Wednesday, December 4th and registration can be found [here](#).

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