

July 29, 2022



**D.C. Update: ONDCP Recommendations for SUD Telehealth, CDC MMWR Vital Signs on Drug Overdose Deaths, New Workforce Webinars, and More**

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## Meet the Member

**Christine K. Scalise, MA, LPC, LCADC, New Jersey  
Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health  
and Addiction Services**



Ms. Scalise has over 30 years' experience and was instrumental in implementing New Jersey's Child Welfare Reform substance use disorder (SUD) treatment recommendations and established a collaborative partnership with child welfare to ensure provision of treatment services. Ms. Scalise has designed and implemented numerous initiatives that address the opioid crisis and other substances with a specific focus on pregnant and parenting women and their families. As an advocate who is passionate for gender specific treatment, Ms. Scalise works with leaders at the State and in the community by building trusting relationships to improve service delivery at all levels. She serves on multiple State Department/Division committees and Task Forces that focus on maternal child health and SUD. Ms. Scalise is Vice-President of the Women's Service Network at NASADAD. Ms. Scalise holds a Master's Degree in Counseling, a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor (LCADC), and Disaster Response Crisis Counselor (DRCC) in the State of New Jersey.

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## White House Happenings

**ONDCP Releases Recommendations for Telehealth for**

## SUD



The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recently released a [report](#) in conjunction with the Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (LAPPA) reviewing telehealth substance use disorder (SUD) services during COVID-19. The report summarizes the current laws and policies related to telehealth services and the limitations and benefits of its use for individuals with SUD, namely that telehealth provides increased access to vulnerable individuals with SUD, decreases costs, and reduces the spread of communicable diseases. The report also outlines recommendations for Congress, federal agencies, and providers to expand telehealth services, including:

- Providing federal support to encourage licensure reciprocity across States;
- Permanently enacting and expanding public health emergency telehealth prescribing changes;
- Increasing funding for mobile applications and assistive telehealth services; and
- Considering the privacy and ethical implications of telehealth use.

In collaboration with LAPPA, ONDCP also recently announced the release of the [Model Syringe Services Program Act](#); the [Model Expanded Access to Emergency Opioid Antagonists Act](#), and the [Model Opioid Litigation Proceeds Act](#). The report's official announcement can be found [here](#).

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## Around the Agencies

### CDC Releases Updated Alcohol and Other Substance Use Fact Sheet

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released an [updated fact sheet on alcohol and other substance use](#), with additional information on the rise in polysubstance use issues. The fact sheet covers the relationship between alcohol and increased overdose risk, the factors associated with higher rates of polysubstance use, and prevention strategies to avert the harms from the use of alcohol with other substances. CDC also launched an [alcohol screening tool](#) to accompany the fact sheet as part of a [greater effort to address excessive alcohol deaths](#).

### NIAAA: Core Resource on Alcohol For Healthcare Professionals



National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

The National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), with input from 70 contributors, including practicing clinicians, released [The Healthcare Professional's Core Resource on Alcohol](#). The resource offers free CME/CE credit for 14 articles on alcohol and health to help clinicians overcome obstacles to evidence-based care for patients with alcohol-related diseases. The Core Resource on Alcohol aims to fill training gaps for providers who do not specialize in alcohol use disorder (AUD) by providing a practical overview of:

- “Foundational knowledge for understanding alcohol-related problems (4 articles)
- Clinical impacts of alcohol (4 articles)
- Strategies for prevention and treatment of alcohol problems (5 articles)
- How to “pull it all together” to promote practice change (1 article)”

The articles are “living documents” that will be updated regularly. The Core Resource also offers additional links for patient care that provide alcohol-related clinical guidance from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), professional organizations, and other federal agencies.

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## Research Roundup

### CDC's MMWR: Vital Signs: Drug Overdose Deaths, by Selected Sociodemographic and Social Determinants of Health Characteristics- 25 States and the District of

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report \(MMWR\) for July 22nd](#) found significant disparities in drug overdose deaths, from 2019 to 2020, across key sociodemographic and social determinants of health characteristics, chiefly sex, age, racial and ethnic subgroups, and income inequality. The report revealed that drug overdose rate disparities have grown, particularly for non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN) people and that social determinants of health exacerbate these issues. A history of substance use was also frequently reported for all groups. The main findings include:

- “From 2019 to 2020, drug overdose death rates increased by 44% and 39% among non-Hispanic Black (Black) and non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN) persons, respectively.
- The rate in 2020 among Black males aged ≥65 years (52.6 per 100,000) was nearly seven times that of non-Hispanic White males aged ≥65 years (7.7).
- Evidence of previous substance use treatment was lowest for Black descendants (8.3%).
- Disparities in overdose deaths, particularly among Black persons, were larger in counties with greater income inequality.
- Opioid overdose rates in 2020 were higher in areas with more opioid treatment program availability compared with areas with lower opioid treatment availability, particularly among Black (34.3 versus 16.6) and AI/AN (33.4 versus 16.2) persons.”

Implementation of evidence-based, culturally responsive, multisectoral overdose prevention and response efforts that address health inequities impacting disproportionately affected populations are key to reducing disparities in overdose rates.

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### Webinars to Watch

#### Southeast PTTC Webinar: WFD Series 2: Principles of the Environmental Approach for the Prevention Professional



The Southeast Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) will host a [webinar](#) on workforce development and key principles related to the Public Policy and Environmental Change Domain of the [Certified Prevention Specialist credentialing process](#). This no-cost webinar will be offered on August 2, 2022, at 10:00 am (ET). The course offers information on key concepts underlying environmental strategies in public policy to enable coalitions to more effectively participate in the development of effective environmental and public policy strategies for implementing prevention services.

#### ATTC Webinar: "A Cultural Adaptation of SBIRT for Working with Hispanic and Latinx Communities" - Part 1



The National Hispanic and Latino Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) will host a [webinar](#) on culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for implementing evidence-based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) practices to "help Hispanic and Latinx clients" reduce substance use in their communities. This first of two-part no-cost webinar will be offered on August 3, 2022, at 2:30 pm (ET). This series will review the current landscape of substance use and the benefits of evidence-based interventions that align with culturally and appropriate services standards (CLAS) to enhance the quality of substance use disorder (SUD) recovery and wellness services for Hispanic communities at risk. The webinar will:

- “Review Hispanic and Latinx behavioral health disparities
- Define social determinants of health and implications for communities

- Define cultural adaptations of practices and purpose
- Describe cultural & linguistic appropriate services (CLAS) standards
- Identify benefits of stigma-free terminology and referred language
- Define evidence-based practice (EBP) and importance of fidelity.”

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