

September 1, 2022



**D.C. Update: International Overdose Awareness Week, FDA Viewpoint on Addressing Drug Use and Overdoses, New SAMHSA and NIDA Meetings, and More**

[Visit our Website](#)



---

## Meet the Member

### **Dr. Morgan Medlock, SSA for Colorado, Behavioral Health Commissioner for the State of Colorado**

Governor Jared Polis appointed Dr. Morgan Medlock as the new Behavioral Health Commissioner for the State of Colorado, and a new member of the Governor's Cabinet. An emergency psychiatrist and addiction medicine specialist by training, she began her role on January 18, 2022.



Dr. Medlock is a 2022-2023 Milbank Memorial Fund Fellow. In addition, Dr. Medlock previously served as the Chief Medical Officer and Director of Crisis and Emergency Services for the Washington, D.C. Department of Behavioral Health. She also served on the faculty of the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Law, Brain, and Behavior, and Howard University College of Medicine. She has also held a previous appointment as a Clinical Fellow in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. Among her many leadership positions, Dr. Medlock served on the American Psychiatric Association's Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities, including a term as Vice Chair from 2019-2020. She also participated in the District of Columbia Hospital Association's Opioid Taskforce, serving as Co-Chair from 2019-2020.

Dr. Medlock received her MPH from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, her MD from the Mayo Clinic School Of Medicine, and her MDiv from Andrews University.

## Nominations Open for the Ramstad/Kennedy Annual Award!

The National Recovery Month Planning Partners is currently calling for nominations for the Ramstad/Kennedy Annual Award. The Award will recognize a State Agency Director who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in support of recovery and *Recovery Month*. The Award will be presented on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm (ET).

To nominate an SSA director, complete and return the [application](#) form by 11:59 pm (ET), Tuesday, September 6, 2022.

---

## International Overdose Awareness Week

August 31 marks [International Overdose Awareness Day \(IOAD\)](#) each year. IOAD is the world's largest annual campaign to remember those we've lost to overdose, acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind, and renew our commitment to end overdose and related harms. The campaign spreads the message about the tragedy of drug overdose death and that drug overdose is preventable. The goals of IOAD are:

- To provide an opportunity for people to publicly mourn loved ones.
- To send a strong message to people who use drugs and people in recovery that they are valued.
- To inform people around the world about the risk of drug overdose.
- To provide basic information on the range of support services that are available.
- To prevent and reduce drug-related harm by supporting evidence-based practice.



On August 26, President Joseph Biden issued [A Proclamation on Overdose Awareness Week, 2022](#) recognizing August 28-September 3, 2022, as Overdose Awareness Week. In the Proclamation, he calls upon “citizens, Government agencies, civil society organizations, healthcare providers, and research institutions to raise awareness of substance use disorder to combat stigmatization, to promote treatment and celebrate recovery, and to strengthen our collective efforts to prevent overdose deaths.”

CAPT Jeffrey A. Coady, Psy.D., ABPP, Acting Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and SAMHSA Region 5 Administrator recognizes IOAD with a new blog post on [Preventing Overdose and Death](#). In the post, Dr. Coady reiterates SAMHSA/CSAP's commitment to “prevention strategies to prevent or delay the use and misuse of substances, as well as efforts to support States and communities to develop comprehensive prevention programs to educate the public about the dangers of sharing medications, raises awareness among pharmaceutical and medical communities on the risks of overprescribing, and implements overdose death prevention strategies, such as naloxone distribution and the purchase of naloxone for first responders.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Overdose Prevention in the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control is marking IOAD with the release of two new articles, showing the latest trends on drug overdose in the United States.

1. A new [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report \(MMWR\)](#) analyzes emergency medical services (EMS) data and highlights trends in nonfatal opioid-involved overdoses. This report identifies disparities in overdose rates by patient and county characteristics and provides strategies on what can be done to decrease overdose.
2. An up-to-date [CDC's State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System \(SUDORS\) COVID-19 data brief](#) describes overarching COVID-19-related themes that may have contributed to increased overdose deaths during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the identified themes, this brief gives examples of prevention approaches that can be used in future public health emergencies to help reduce overdose deaths.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently released the [FDA Overdose Prevention Framework](#). According to the FDA, there are four priorities designed to complement the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Overdose Prevention Strategy](#) and ONDCP's [National Drug Control Strategy](#). The four priorities within the FDA Overdose Prevention Framework are:

1. Supporting primary prevention by eliminating unnecessary initial prescription drug exposure and inappropriate prolonged prescribing.
2. Encouraging harm reduction through innovation and education.
3. Advancing development of evidence-based treatments for substance use disorders.
4. Protecting the public from unapproved, diverted, or counterfeit drugs presenting overdose risks.

NASADAD recognizes and thanks all of our Members for their dedication and commitment to reducing overdoses in their State.

---

## Around the Agencies

### FDA Commissioner Outlines Agency Priorities to Address Drug Use and Overdoses



Dr. Robert Califf, Commissioner of Food and Drugs at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), recently published a [Viewpoint](#) in the Journal of the American Medical Association outlining the agency's collaborative approach to addressing drug use and overdoses across the biomedical, clinical, and public health communities. To ensure better health outcomes, the FDA is focused on creating a transparent system with high-quality evidence that is effectively linked across the U.S. biomedical ecosystem. The FDA will prioritize improving access to naloxone and prescriber education, developing new therapies for substance use disorder (SUD) and pain management, and broadening their opioid benefit-risk assessments to account for risks associated with SUD, unintentional exposure, and overdose. Dr. Califf also emphasizes the role of the clinician as key to preventing drug misuse and overdose deaths and reversing inequities in health outcomes.

### NIDA HEAL Research Funding Opportunity for Health Centers



The National Institute of Health's (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is accepting applications for the Helping to End Addiction Long-term ([HEAL Initiative: Research Studies to Develop and Implement Interventions to Prevent Opioid Misuse in Community Health Centers](#)). The research funding opportunity aims to support interdisciplinary teams' research, in partnership with health center leaders, regarding the development, adaptation, and implementation of interventions to prevent misuse of opioids and other substances. The opportunity is part of NIH's [HEAL Prevention Initiative](#) and will address the opioid crisis by producing new or adapted interventions to prevent opioid use disorder (OUD) in community health center patients and developing implementation strategies for screening and referral to preventive services for misuse of opioids and other substances. The application deadline is November 8, 2022.

NIH will host an informational [webinar](#) for potential applicants on September 6, 2022, at 3:30 pm (ET).

### NIDA Meeting: Prehospital Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

The National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Center for the Clinical Trials Network (CCTN) will host a [virtual meeting](#) with stakeholders, experts, and federal staff on novel developments in prehospital treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD). This no-cost virtual meeting will be held on September 6, 2022, from

11:00 am-5:00 pm (ET). The meeting will present research on innovative EMS and paramedic administered treatments for OUD, highlight programs that have successfully reduced opioid overdose, and identify priorities for researching prehospital approaches to OUD. More details on the meeting and future events can be found on the [meeting announcement page](#).

## Upcoming SAMHSA Advisory Committee for Women's Services Meeting on Mental Health and Substance Use

On September 6, from 1:00-4:30 pm (ET), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will hold a [virtual meeting](#) of the Advisory Committee for Women's Services (ACWS). This meeting will include discussions about SAMHSA's current strategies for meeting the mental health and substance use treatment needs of women and girls, priorities for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on the health needs of women and children, and opportunities for expanding access to health services for women and children. More information about SAMHSA advisory council meetings can be found [here](#).

## NIDA Symposium on the Avenir Award Program for Research on Substance Use Disorders and HIV/AIDS



The National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) HIV Research Program will host a [virtual symposium](#) to present the awardees of the [Avenir Award Program for Research on Substance Use Disorders and HIV/AIDS](#). This no-cost symposium will be held on September 7, 2022, at 1:00 pm (ET). This Avenir Award is designed for [early-stage investigators](#) pursuing innovative HIV research among people with substance use disorders (SUD). Awardees will receive up to \$375,000 per year for 4 years. Applications do not require preliminary data and may propose research in any high-priority HIV/AIDS research area that has the potential to open new areas for research or lead to new avenues for treatment or prevention of HIV/AIDS among substance users. More details on the meeting and a list of awardees can be found [here](#).

---

## Research Roundup

### SAMHSA Supplemental Research Bulletin on Innovations for Delivering Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services During COVID-19



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently published the Supplemental Research Bulletin: [Adaptations and Innovations for Delivering Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). This bulletin highlights the new limitations on service delivery and innovations healthcare organizations and professionals made to deliver mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services during the pandemic. The article explores the growing mental health and medical needs of communities due to COVID-19, reviews key innovations (including take-home dosing and increasing the provision of harm reduction supplies), and proposes avenues for further research. This edition also considers the benefits and challenges of telehealth and telemedicine and the utilization of those services.