

November 2021 Newsletter
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CANNABIS USE DISORDER ASSOCIATED WITH HEART ATTACKS

According to research recently presented at an American Heart Association conference, cannabis use disorder is associated with an increased risk of heart attack, especially among younger patients. Read more [here](#).

RECORD NUMBER OF AMERICANS DIED OF DRUG OVERDOSES DURING PANDEMIC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said a record number of Americans died of drug overdoses in the 12 months ending April 2021. It is the first time that drug-related deaths have reached six figures in any 12-month period. Read more [here](#).

WH RELEASES STATE MODEL LAW TO MAKE NALOXONE ACCESS CONSISTENT ACROSS COUNTRY

On November 17, the White House provided states with a legislative road map for removing barriers to an opioid overdose reversal drug. Read more [here](#).

STIGMA ADDRESSED IN RECENT VOLKOW BLOG POST

In a recent blog post, Dr. Nora Volkow addresses stigma as one of the biggest obstacles to confronting America's current drug crisis. Read more [here](#).

NIH LISTENING SESSIONS THROUGH UNITE INITIATIVE

NIH launched the [UNITE initiative](#) in March of 2021 to address structural racism in the biomedical research enterprise. Through this initiative, NIH is holding a series of listening sessions to learn from external stakeholders about the full range of issues and challenges in advancing racial and ethnic equity in the biomedical research enterprise. The insights shared during these listening sessions will help to identify priorities for UNITE and inform the development of an NIH action plan. Read more and register [here](#).

CURES 2.0 LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

On November 16, Reps. DeGette and Upton introduced CURES 2.0. The legislation, among other things, authorizes \$6.5 billion for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). Read more [here](#).

BIDEN NOMINATES CALIFF TO LEAD FDA

President Biden announced he is nominating Dr. Robert Califf to serve as commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

MEDICARE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE FINAL RULE

On November 2, CMS issued a final rule that includes updates on policy changes for Medicare payments under the Physician Fee Schedule (PFS), and other Medicare Part B issues, on or after January 1, 2022. The PFS final rule expands access to telehealth services provided for purposes of diagnosis, evaluation or treatment of a mental health disorder through December 31, 2023. Read more [here](#).

HEARING ON INTERAGENCY PROPOSAL TO COMBAT ILLICIT FENTANYL-RELATED SUBSTANCES

On December 2, the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee held a hearing entitled, "The Overdose Crisis: Interagency Proposal to Combat Illicit Fentanyl-Related Substances." Read more [here](#).