

April 2023 Newsletter
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White House Designates Xylazine As Emerging Threat

On April 12, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) officially designated fentanyl adulterated or associated with xylazine as an emerging threat to the United States. Read more [here](#).

Prevalence of Stimulant Therapy For ADHD Associated With Higher Rates of Misuse Among Teens

According to a study published in *JAMA Network Open*, researchers have identified a strong association between prevalence of prescription stimulant therapy for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and rates of prescription stimulant misuse by students in middle and high schools. Read more [here](#).

NIH HEAL Initiative Meets People Where They Are

In an April 18 post, Rebecca Baker, Ph.D, performing the duties as director of NIH Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative, examined HEAL's goals to combat the effects of the opioid crisis across America. Read more [here](#).

SAFE Banking Act Reintroduced

On April 26, a bipartisan group of lawmakers reintroduced the SAFE Banking Act, that would allow banks to provide financial services to cannabis companies without fear of federal punishment. Read more [here](#).

Veterans Medical Marijuana Research Bill Fails to Advance in Senate

A bipartisan package of veterans' bills was blocked on the Senate floor over Republican concerns about expanded research into medical marijuana use for veterans' pain management and mental health relief. The cannabis measure, one of five bills in the legislative package, passed out of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee with unanimous, bipartisan support in February but failed to gain the 10 Republican lawmakers needed to continue debate on the issue in the full chamber. Read more [here](#).

US Adult Cigarette Smoking Rate Hits New All-Time Low

According to recent CDC survey data, U.S. cigarette smoking dropped to an all-time low last year, with 1 in 9 adults saying they were current smokers. Meanwhile, electronic cigarette use rose, to about 1 in 17 adults. Read more [here](#).

House Labor HHS Subcommittee Hearing on NIH Budget Request

On April 19, the House Labor HHS Appropriations Subcommittee held a hearing on the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for the National Institute of Health (NIH). Ranking Member DeLauro called for more funding for the NIH, indicating that the President's proposed increase is too small. In response to questioning, Dr. Tabak said that keeping the NIH at FY22 levels would result in 5,000 fewer medical research grants for FY24. Read more [here](#).

Biden Expected To Nominate NIH Director

It has been reported that President Biden plans to nominate current National Cancer Institute (NCI) Director, Monica Bertagnolli, to run the National Institutes of Health. Bertagnolli was a Boston cancer surgeon before being appointed as the first woman director of NCI in October 2022. A formal nomination has not yet been made. Read more [here](#).

CMS Announces Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Flexibility

On April 17th, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced they would allow states to re-enroll inmates 90 days prior to their release. This would allow patients to receive SUD and mental health treatment prior to their release, prepare them for continued treatment upon release, and ensure state and local governments are reimbursed for such costs. Read more [here](#).