

February 2024 Newsletter

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SAMHSA Issues Final Rule on Medications for OUD

The Department of Health and Human Services finalized rules that will permanently allow buprenorphine to be prescribed through telehealth without an in-person visit. Read more [here](#).

High Potency THC Research

On February 1, Reps. Pete Sessions (R-TX), Andy Harris (R-MD) and Sen. Pete Ricketts (R-NE) introduced a resolution pushing for more research at both the local and federal levels on the impacts of high-potency THC. Read more [here](#).

Law Enforcement Seizures of Psilocybin Rose Dramatically Between 2017-2022

According to a NIDA study, law enforcement seizures of “magic mushrooms” or “shrooms” containing the psychoactive component psilocybin increased dramatically in the United States between January 2017 and December 2022. Read more [here](#).

Final Rule Released on Medications for the Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

On February 2, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a final rule on medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder. Read more [here](#).

Center for Tobacco Products Announces Continuation of PATH Study

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products (CTP) announced the continuation of the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

SAMHSA Finalizes 42 CFR Part 2 Rule

On February 8, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) finalized a rule making changes to 42 CFR Part 2 privacy protections for substance use treatment records, consistent with Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). A fact sheet on the rule is available [here](#).

Higher Naloxone Dose Causes Withdrawal

On February 8, CDC reported that people who received a high dose of naloxone were more than twice as likely to experience withdrawal symptoms than those who received half that dose, but there was no significant difference in survival. Read more [here](#).

CDC Report on Teen Drug Use

According to research published by CDC on February 8, teenagers with suspected substance use problems say they turn to drugs because of a crushing need to relax and escape worries. Read more [here](#).

Lawmakers Call on FDA to Take Necessary Steps to Tackle Opioid Epidemic

On February 9, a group of senators led by Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) sent a letter to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) urging the agency to include Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD), specifically buprenorphine and methadone, in its List of Essential Medicines. Read more [here](#).

Smoking Drugs Found as Primary Cause of Overdose Deaths

A study released on February 15 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found more Americans are dying of overdoses caused by smoking drugs than by injecting them. Read more [here](#).

Smoking Cannabis Associated with Increased Risk of Heart Attack, Stroke

According to a study supported by the National Institutes of Health, frequent cannabis smoking may significantly increase a person's risk for heart attack and stroke. Read more [here](#).

Congress Passes Short-Term Spending Agreement, Works on Full Year Bills

With just days to go before a partial government shutdown beginning March 2nd, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) which would extend spending deadlines until March 8th and March 22nd. Under the CR, the six bills which are closest to being completed would be delayed until March 8th and the remaining six bills, which includes the Labor HHS bill, would be extended through March 22nd. Read more [here](#).