

CONSORTIUM CHRONICLE

NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Webinar: January 22, 2026 | See info below and [register here](#).



WEBINAR

Identifying Vulnerable Populations: The Intersection of Human Trafficking, Substance Use Disorder, and Emerging Drug Trends

Join the WellLink Health Alliance and the Northeast Ohio Opioid Consortium for our January Education Series. This session, supported by the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) grant, tackles the critical and complex challenges at the intersection of human trafficking (HT) and substance use disorder (SUD).

We will explore how to identify human trafficking within harm reduction settings, featuring a new training video from the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Our guest expert will also discuss emerging drug trends, including the increasing prevalence of cocaine with opioids, and analyze the impact these shifts are having on our community's most vulnerable populations.

Join us
Jan 22

12:00PM - 1:30PM

This event provides vital insights for professionals working to build a more cohesive system of care, and is designed for those in behavioral health, criminal justice, public safety, and harm reduction.

Featured Speakers:



Kristin J. Hess,
RN, BSN, CARN, CCHP, EMT-P
Clinical Education
Specialist, Office of Opioid
Safety, MetroHealth



Anna Becks,
BSN, RN, SANE-A
Forensic Unit Manager,
The MetroHealth System



FOR QUESTIONS
Contact Jodi Mitchell, Sr. Director,
Government Relations & Policy
| Jodi.Mitchell@MyWellLink.com



REGISTRATION
Please scan the QR code or click
the button below to register.

SIGN UP NOW



This panel is supported by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health's Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) LOCAL grant, which aims to build strong partnerships across public health, health systems, and community organizations. By bringing together leading experts from emergency medicine, public health, and community-based recovery services, this session will address the crisis head-on, exploring innovative, evidence-based solutions.

[f](#) [in](#) [v](#) [e](#) | WellLinkHealthAlliance.com
1226 Huron Road East, Cleveland, OH 44115
216.696.6900

Governor DeWine takes action on Kratom

Governor DeWine [announced](#) that he is requesting the Ohio Board of Pharmacy to immediately designate all synthetic Kratom compounds and other dangerous compounds derived from the active ingredient in Kratom as illegal drugs through emergency rule. The Governor is also asking the Board of Pharmacy to pursue rules through the regular rulemaking process for scheduling mitragynine (natural Kratom). This follows [concerns raised by Ohio lawmakers](#) over the sale of synthetic kratom and "7-OH" products, which are being sold at gas stations and smoke shops.

Lawmakers called for tighter regulations, citing the addictive nature of these substances.

OneOhio Releases RFP

The OneOhio Recovery Foundation announced a new statewide grant opportunity making up to \$45.7 million available to support prevention, treatment and recovery. Organizations working to address substance use disorder are invited to prepare for the upcoming Funding Inquiry window, which opens on Wednesday, January 14. The full Regional Grant Cycle 2 Request for Proposals is available on the grant headquarters webpage at [OneOhioFoundation.com/Grants](https://www.oneohiofoundation.com/grants).

Redesigned MentalHealthFirstAid.Org

The official Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) website (MentalHealthFirstAid.org) has been recently redesigned to provide a better user experience. The new site features an intuitive layout and several new tools to make information and resources more accessible. Key features include improved navigation, a 24/7 MHFA chatbot, inspiring stories and resources, enhanced accessibility and translation, and improved crisis support. These changes are designed to make it easier for people to learn about, teach, and take action for mental health, helping to ensure the lessons from MHFA last a lifetime. Click [here](#) to view the updated website

Ohio's 2026 Mental Health and Addiction Conference: *Inspiring a Stronger Tomorrow*

The Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities Foundation is proud to host **Ohio's 2026 Mental Health and Addiction Conference: *Inspiring a Stronger Tomorrow*** on **June 1-2, 2026** at the Hyatt Regency in downtown

Columbus, OH. OACBHA is pleased to continue to expand on the successes of our prior conferences and continues to have a broader focus on addressing mental health and addiction topics. This 16th annual, two-day conference will focus on efforts related to mental health and addiction prevention, education, intervention, treatment, recovery, family supports, community engagement, and more. The conference will help advance the resources and knowledge essential for communities to provide support to those in need.

OACBHA is requesting presentations from all categories of professionals, individuals in recovery, and family members. OACBHA is seeking a variety of presentation proposals for this event. [Click here to submit a call for presentations](#)

If you have questions about the conference or this form, please contact Shelby Stutzman at [sstutzman@oacbha.org](mailto:ssutzman@oacbha.org)

Coping with the Holidays

The Cuyahoga County ADAMHS Board, in partnership with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Cuyahoga County, has released the 2025 “Coping with the Holidays” booklet. This resource offers practical strategies and local mental health resources to help people of all ages manage stress and care for their well-being during the holidays. [Download the 2025 “Coping with the Holidays” booklet here.](#) Topics in the booklet include managing holiday stress, self-care, managing grief, recovery friendly celebrations, Seasonal Affective Disorder and more.

OneOhio Announced Launch of 2026 Grant Cycle

OneOhio Executive Director Alisha Nelson and Director of Partnership and Outreach Sarah Anstine announced that the Foundation will launch its next grant cycle in December 2025. Lessons from the first grant round and feedback provided through region surveys have been used to streamline Regional Grant Cycle 2 processes and help set clear funding priorities to guide applicants.

OneOhio staff has been working with the 19 OneOhio Regions over the past several months to help them prepare for the next grant round, and that work will continue through November as the Regions establish funding priorities ahead of the Request for Proposals (RFP) release in December. The Foundation will then begin accepting Funding Inquiries in January 2026, with submission reviews expected to start in February.

Members of the public should visit [OneOhioFoundation.com/Grants](https://www.oneohiofoundation.com/grants) to learn more.

Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace

Supporting employees in their recovery journey by becoming a recovery-friendly workplace benefits everyone. It not only aids your team but also improves your bottom line, boosts productivity and reduces turnover. To explore becoming an Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace, review the benefits to your organization, discover practical steps to foster a supportive environment and get a designation through the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

FREE COMMUNITY DINNER at | The Recovery Collective

Made possible with help from  Neighborhood Leadership Development Program
A Connection for Community Change

- **Where:** 6400 Memphis Ave, Cleveland 44144
- **When:** EVERY SATURDAY AT 6:00pm
- **What:** Join us for a free meal and socializing
- **Who:** Open to everyone - people in recovery, recovery allies, community members, and children welcome!

Policy & News Updates

Trump Declares War on Fentanyl

President Donald Trump signed [an executive order](#) Monday classifying fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction, giving the U.S. government additional legal firepower in its efforts to combat illegal trafficking of the synthetic drug.

WellLink Joins Voices for Non-Opioid Choices Coalition

WellLink and the Northeast Ohio Opioid Consortium joins the Voices for Non-Opioid Choices (Voices) coalition in supporting [the Non-Opioids Prevent Addiction in the Nation \(NOPAIN\) for Veterans Act \(H.R.4509/S.3209\)](#) and [the Alternatives to Prevent Addiction in the Nation \(Alternatives to PAIN\) Act \(H.R. 1227/ S. 475\)](#). Voices is dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to non-addictive pain management therapies. Expanding access to non-opioids will help communities continue to make meaningful strides toward tackling the national opioid epidemic.

President signs SUPPORT Act reauthorization bill into law

President Trump [signed](#) the SUPPORT Act (H.R. 2483) into law on December 1, 2025. The legislation reauthorizes key prevention, treatment and recovery programs for patients with substance use disorder. It also includes programs to support the behavioral health workforce.

The SUPPORT for Patients and Communications Reauthorization Act of 2025 reauthorizes grants and other programs supporting pregnant and postpartum women with substance use disorders, youth prevention and recovery, recovery housing, community-based recovery, loan repayment for providers, overdose prevention, treatment for children experiencing psychological trauma and behavioral health education for students, according to the law.

The law also expands programs. For example, it allows first responders to purchase drugs or devices for non-opioid overdoses. Employment support programs for people in recovery also will be broadened to include transportation services. And a temporary technical assistance center will be authorized to support the National Peer-Run Training and Technical Assistance Center for Addiction Recovery Support.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Access in the Coast Guard

Legislation was amended into the Fiscal 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that mandates that the Commandant of the Coast Guard update the

Coast Guard's policy regarding the use of medication to treat drug overdoses, specifically including naloxone or similar treatments for opioid and fentanyl overdoses. The updated policy must ensure that naloxone is available on all Coast Guard installations and in every operational environment. Additionally, the Commandant is required to provide a detailed briefing within two years to Congress on the implementation of the policy, the prevalence of fentanyl use, substance abuse mitigation efforts, and past instances of naloxone use. The briefing must also include a review of the progress made and the status of a memorandum of understanding for Coast Guard access to a national tracking system, all while complying with privacy laws.

Access to non-opioid treatments for pain relief

In the recently released Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) Final Rule, CMS finalized its policies around the use of non-opioid treatment for pain relief. CMS believes that expanding access to non-opioid pain relief options will help reduce opioid reliance and lower the risk of opioid-use disorder, thereby helping to prevent this chronic disease among Americans.

Specifically, CMS will continue to provide temporary separate payments for certain non-opioid treatment for pain relief in the HOPD and ASC settings for CY 2026. The agency is finalizing five drugs and 13 medical devices to qualify as non-opioid treatments for pain relief with separate reimbursement in both the HOPD and ASC settings in CY 2026.

Guidance for Investing the Opioid Settlement Funds

Communities across the country are deciding how to use opioid settlement funds and have an opportunity to invest in prevention today to protect future generations. Partnership to End Addiction is pleased to share a new resource, [*Guidance for Investing the Opioid Settlement Funds in Primary Prevention*](#), to help communities and leaders make informed, evidence-based decisions that strengthen prevention efforts. The guide summarizes the research on effective prevention strategies, highlights approved uses in the Settlement Agreement aligned with primary prevention and showcases real-world examples from states and communities already investing the funds in primary prevention-aligned strategies.

ASAM Policy Round: Patient Review and Restriction Programs (PRRPs)

This two-pager covers what you need to know about PRRPs, including how they're used in public and private insurance, the impacts on access to addiction medications, and more.

[Read the educational brief.](#)

[Read the full letter.](#)

ASAM Supports Legislation Expanding Occupational Therapy to People with Substance Use Disorders (SUD)

The bipartisan Occupational Therapy Mental Health Parity Act would expand access to occupational therapy (OT) services for individuals with SUD under Medicare. While OT services for this population are currently covered under Medicare, OT practitioners are often underutilized in behavioral health settings, making it difficult for patients to access their services. This bill would require the HHS Secretary to issue education and clarification to ensure Medicare beneficiaries can receive this care.

[Read the coalition letter supporting this bill.](#)

Transforming Care: Insights from Social Medicine in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment

A new report published by Essential Hospitals Institute details how nine essential hospitals enhanced efforts to treat opioid use disorder (OUD) with social medicine through a grant-funded learning collaborative. [Transforming Care: Insights from Social Medicine in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment](#) highlights how targeting the social, economic, and environmental factors that affect health can improve the successful treatment of OUD. It unpacks strategies for screening and intervention, common challenges and strategies for managing social needs, and methods of measuring success. The report features The MetroHealth System, a member of the collaborative convened under this project.

[Trends in Methadone Use for Pain and Opioid Use Disorder Among Medicaid Enrollees](#)

JAMA Health Forum

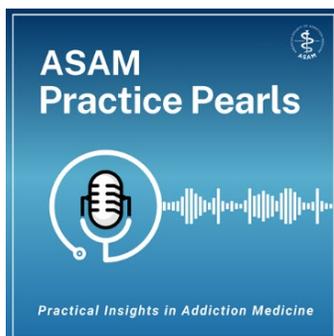
This research letter used a 100% dataset from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to evaluate the number of patients receiving methadone or buprenorphine for opioid use disorder among adult Medicaid enrollees from 1999 to 2020. Data represented Medicaid enrollees in all 50 states, Washington DC, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; dual Medicare and Medicaid enrollees were

excluded. There were modest increases in methadone and buprenorphine use from 1999 to 2010. From 2010 to 2020, use of both methadone and buprenorphine increased, with buprenorphine use increasing substantially more than methadone use. Also from 2010 to 2020, use of methadone for pain declined.

Training Opportunities

Treatment of Tobacco Use Disorder in Clinical Practice

Gain practical strategies to assess, diagnose, and treat tobacco use disorder using pharmacologic and behavioral approaches. Explore how TUD intersects with other substance use disorders and apply integrated care principles. ***This course fulfills the DEA-required SUD education. Register [HERE](#)***



SAM Practice Pearls features in-depth discussions on addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery. This series explores the latest evidence-based approaches to addiction medicine. Listen to interviews with leading experts as they delve into critical topics and share practical tools you can use to improve patient care and promote public health.

Recent Episodes:

- [Overdose Awareness: Preventing, Responding, and Intervening](#)
- [Perinatal Substance Use Care: Listening, Trust, and Treatment](#)
- [Listening First: The Future of Women's Addiction Treatment](#)

Listen Here - [ASAM Practice Pearls | ASAM Education](#)

Addressing Issues at the Pharmacy with Buprenorphine Prescriptions: A Toolkit for Clinicians

What should you do if a pharmacist has questions about or declines to fill a buprenorphine prescription? This toolkit walks through common issues prescribers of buprenorphine for OUD may face and offers recommendations to resolve them.

 [Access the toolkit.](#)

 [Get a one-page summary.](#)

These recommendations are from the ASAM-endorsed [Pharmacy Access to Resources and Medication for Opioid Use Disorder \(PhARM-OUD\) Guideline: A Joint Consensus Practice Guideline from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and the National Community Pharmacists Association.](#)

The [Ohio Substance Use Disorders Center of Excellence](#) (SUD COE) at Case Western Reserve University's Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences invites practitioners to deepen their understanding of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. We are pleased to offer a series of training programs designed to equip professionals with the latest and most effective strategies in SUD treatment. Also, check out the SUD COE website for [free trainings](#) (with CEUs!), as well as a wealth of [other resources](#)"

[Clinical QuickNotes on Substance Use Disorders](#)

The Ohio Substance Use Disorders Center of Excellence (SUD COE) has developed “Clinical QuickNotes on Substance Use Disorders” as a tool to provide busy treatment providers with quick overviews of clinically relevant topics. These QuickNotes are designed to be easily digestible, offering essential information that can be reviewed in just a few minutes. Check out each topic below!

- [Cannabis and Mental Health: Navigating Clinical Realities in Ohio](#)
- [Treating Opioid Use Disorder During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period](#)
- [Medications for Opioid Use Disorder \(MOUD\) in Adolescents and Young Adults](#)
- [What’s Happened with Alcohol Use Disorder?](#)
- [Ohio Medical Board Amends Rules for Medication Treatment of Opioid Use Disorders](#)
- [Responding to Provider Trauma, Grief, and Loss Following Unintentional Lethal Overdose](#)
- [Family Grief and Loss Experiences Following Unintentional Lethal Overdose](#)

The **Opioid Response Network's (ORN)** mission is to reduce overdoses and address opioid and stimulant use disorders, and play a key role in tackling the current epidemic. For more information, go to www.OpioidResponseNetwork.org and learn how you and your organization can make a request for free training and education.

- [Hot Topics - On-Demand - AOAAM Learning Portal:](#)

Other Resources

Educational Resources Available WellLink

- [Igniting Compassion Documentary](#)
- [Igniting Compassion Shorts](#)
- [Opioid Consortium Education](#)
- [Naloxone Toolkit](#)
- [A Clinician's Guide: Dental Consequences of MOUD + Solutions](#)
- [Clinicians Guide: on Xylazine Wound Management](#)
- [A Clinician's Guide: The Intersection of Human Trafficking and Substance Use Disorders](#)
- [NEO Opioid Consortium - Beyond Narcan: Treating Opioid Use Disorder in the Field](#)
- [Opioid Roundtable: Using Collaboration to Address the Opioid Crisis in Northeast Ohio](#)
- [NEO Opioid Consortium Education Series: Effective Communication with Individuals with SUD](#)
- [NEO Opioid Consortium Education Series: Appreciative Approach: From Medical Dominancy to Relational Recovery](#)
- [NEO Opioid Education Series: Demystifying Buprenorphine Treatment in the Outpatient Clinic Setting](#)
- [NEO Opioid Education Series: Harnessing Health IT to Strengthen Opioid Stewardship](#)
- [Previous Issues of The Consortium Chronicle Newsletter](#)
- [NEO Opioid Education Series: The Future of Pain Management: Cutting-Edge, Non-Opioid Solutions](#)
- [NEO Opioid Consortium Education Series - Chronic Pain: Bridging Clinical Insight & Lived Experience](#)
- [NEO Opioid Consortium Education Series: SUD Understanding Addiction, Treatment & Recovery](#)



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