National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

NIAAA Director's Report on Institute Activities to the 165th Meeting of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Thursday February 8, 2024

Virtual Meeting

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IN MEMORIAM

Sally M. Anderson, Ph.D. passed away on September 14, 2023. Dr. Anderson made major and seminal contributions to efforts in FASD and for more than two decades was integral to the leadership of the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (ICCFASD). Dr. Anderson joined NIAAA in 2002 as Deputy Director of the Division of Basic Research, and subsequently served as the interim Acting Director of the newly created Division of Neuroscience and Behavior. In 2005, Dr. Anderson was appointed the ICCFASD Scientific Coordinator and Executive Secretary, and in 2016 she became a Special Advisor to the ICCFASD leadership, a position she held until her retirement in 2021. Dr. Anderson served tirelessly and with great dedication in facilitating collaboration across federal agencies and worked to accomplish major milestones in the FASD field. Her contributions also helped to pave the way for the addition of Neurobehavioral Disorder-Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (ND-PAE) to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*. Prior to her career at NIAAA, Dr. Anderson conducted research on the relationships between brain chemistry and behavioral effects at multiple research institutions, including the University of Colorado, the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Dr. Anderson was an esteemed colleague, mentor, and member of the NIAAA family. Her drive to increase awareness of FASD, and her desire to help address the real-life challenges faced by individuals with FASD has benefited the individuals affected and their families. She will be deeply missed.

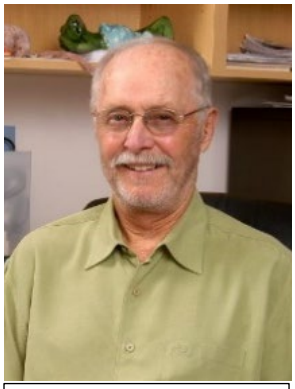

Photo courtesy of Scripps Research

George Robert "G-Bob" Siggins, Ph.D., passed away on September 22, 2023. He was both a distinguished neuroscientist and a talented musician. Dr. Siggins retired in 2013 as professor emeritus at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, CA., which he joined in 1983. His research included the molecular and electrophysiological effects of neuropeptides, drugs of addiction, and neuropathology of brain neurons, with a particular focus on alcohol-related effects. Dr. Siggins made seminal contributions to the addiction field, including demonstrating that alcohol had cellular actions that could be linked to specific key neurocircuits and yield effects on alcohol-related reward, withdrawal, and craving. Prior to joining Scripps, Dr. Siggins served as Associate Director of the A.V. Davis Center for Behavioral Neurobiology at the Salk Institute (1975-1984) and worked at the National Institute of Mental Health's Laboratory of Neuropharmacology at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, DC. He earned his Ph.D. at Boston University in 1967, after graduating from Harvard University in 1960. It was as a student in the Boston area that Dr. Siggins began his music career. He co-founded the Charles River Valley Boys, an American bluegrass group that was best known for their 1966 album, Beatle Country. Dr. Siggins will be remembered as an outstanding alcohol researcher, a kind and supportive mentor, an accomplished musician, a remarkable man, and a good friend.

NIAAA BUDGET

FY 2023

NIAAA closed Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 on September 30. The final appropriation for NIAAA was $595.3 million. This represented a $21.7 million or a 3.8% increase over the FY 2022 budget. The NIAAA appropriation included a $6.7 million set aside for the BRAIN initiative. A summary of key funding actions within this appropriation are as follows:

- NIAAA awarded 747 research project grants (RPGs), including 219 competing awards, which corresponds to a success rate of 30.5%.
- NIAAA funded 22 research centers at $33.8 million.
- NIAAA funded 181 other research grants at $45.0 million, including career development awards, one cooperative clinical agreement, and several resource and conference grant awards.
- NIAAA supported 329 full-time training positions at $17.3 million.
- NIAAA funding for the research and development (R&D) contract portfolio was $35.7 million.
- NIAAA support for intramural research totaled $62.1 million.

FY 2024

NIAAA is currently operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) until March 8, 2024. Following NIH policy, all grants will be funded at 90 percent. This is consistent with NIH practice during the CRs from FY 2006 - 2023. Upward adjustments to awarded levels will be considered after our FY 2024 appropriations are enacted, but NIH expects grantee institutions to monitor their expenditures carefully during this period. All legislative mandates that were in effect in FY 2023 remain in effect under the CR.

FY 2025

The preparation of the FY 2025 President's Budget is under way.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Dr. Bill Dunty was awarded a 2023 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Collaboration Award for his efforts with the NIH Pediatric Research Consortium (N-PeRC) COVID Notice of Special Interest Review Group.

The following NIAAA staff members received the prestigious NIH Director's Award in 2023:

- **Dr. Bin Gao** received an individual award for major contributions to the field of liver biology, particularly our understanding of the molecular mechanisms and potential treatment of liver disease.

- **Jessica Cullen** for increasing automation and digitally transforming enterprise-wide business processes achieved through building and delivering electronic workflow solutions as part of the Enterprise Content Management System @ NIH Team.
- **Dr. Mariela Shirley** for outstanding efforts as a member of the NIH-Wide PhenX Social Determinants of Health Working Group.
- **Dr. Deidra Roach** for (1) outstanding contributions as part of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Working Group that developed the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for DEIA, and (2) outstanding efforts as part of the working group to launch Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS), a new community-led multisectoral structural intervention research model across NIH.
- **Dr. Bridget Williams-Simmons** for outstanding contributions to advance the NIH Mission through development of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for DEIA as part of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Working Group.

STAFF TRANSITIONS

New Staff

Dr. Chamindi Seneviratne joined the Medications Development Branch in the Division of Treatment and Recovery as a Health Scientist Administrator. Before joining NIAAA, she held Assistant Professor positions at the University of Virginia and the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Dr. Seneviratne received her Medical Degree from Riga Stradins University (Medical Academy of Latvia) and completed her post-doctoral research in neurobiochemistry at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Dr. Seneviratne's areas of focus are precision medicine, addiction genomics and transcriptomics, pharmacogenomics, psychopharmacology, medications development, placebo effects in alcohol use disorder, alcohol and comorbid substance misuse, human laboratory trials, and clinical trial methodology.

Dr. Oluwaseun Faborode joined the Section on Neural Circuits (SNC) in the Division of Intramural Clinical and Biological Research (DIBCR) as a Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellow. Dr. Faborode will investigate the molecular mechanisms that drive inflammation-related brain damage and altered cognitive function resulting from chronic alcohol misuse. Dr. Faborode's efforts will aid in the development of therapeutic strategies for mitigating the physical and anatomic effects of alcohol misuse.

Dr. David Haggerty joined the Laboratory for Integrative Neuroscience (LIN), DICBR, as a Post-Doctoral Intramural Research Training Award fellow (IRTA). Dr. Haggerty's research will examine the acute and chronic effects of alcohol on neurons in the globus pallidus external segment (GPe), a center within the basal ganglia that is implicated in decision-making and reward. Dr. Haggerty will use in vivo miniscope imaging to examine alcohol-related activity of different GPe neuronal subpopulations in relation to behavior.

Dr. Mabanyi Mesembe Lobe Maloba joined the Section on Medicinal Chemistry (SMC), DICBR, as an African Post-doctoral Trainee Initiative fellow from the University of Buea in Cameroon. Dr. Maloba's fellowship will focus on the use of medicinal chemistry tools to design and synthesize new therapeutic molecules, with an emphasis on screening against organisms that cause malaria and other neglected tropical diseases.

Dr. Angelica Rusilowski joined the Clinical Neuroimaging Research Core (CNRC), DICBR, as a Post-Doctoral IRTA. Dr. Rusilowski will use a combination of neuroimaging techniques and neuromodulation therapies, such as transcranial magnetic stimulation, to accurately diagnose and effectively treat different alcohol use disorder (AUD) subtypes. She will also study the relationship between AUD subtypes with co-occurring mental illness and neural mechanisms.

Dr. Burhan Yokus joined the Laboratory of Cardiovascular Physiology and Tissue Injury (LCPTI), DICBR, as a Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellow. Dr. Yokus will explore the role of the gut-liver axis in alcohol-induced neuroinflammation and cardiovascular dysfunction, contribute to developing and characterizing a model of hepatopulmonary syndrome, and explore the effects of alcohol on cardiovascular aging.

New Post-Baccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) Fellows:

- **Marcel De Jesus Vega** – Section of Sensory Science and Metabolism
- **Morgan Ford** - Clinical Neuroimaging Research Core
- **Marcelle Halfeld Bauzon** - Laboratory of Behavioral and Genomics Neuroscience
- **Rosangele Hall** - Section of Sensory Science and Metabolism
- **Keita Morisaki** - Laboratory of Neuroimaging
- **Sophie Mosley** - Laboratory of Behavioral and Genomics Neuroscience
- **Aurora Sheridan** - Laboratory for Integrative Neuroscience

Transitioning Staff

Dr. Bipul Ray, a Postdoctoral Visiting Fellow in the Section of Molecular Pharmacology and Toxicology, has transferred to the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research.

Departures

Dr. Benjamin Benson-Xu, Health Scientist Administrator in the Division of Neuroscience and Behavior, retired after 21 years of federal service. Dr. Xu came to the NIH in 1997 as a post-doctoral fellow at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. In 2015, Dr. Xu joined NIAAA and managed a large research portfolio of studies focused on cognitive neuroscience and alcohol use disorder.

Dr. Hemin Chin, Health Scientist Administrator in the Division of Neuroscience and Behavior, retired after 40 years of federal service. Dr. Chin spent the last six years of his federal career at NIAAA and during that time he managed large-scale genetics and genomics projects such as Collaborative Studies on Genetics of Alcoholism (COGA) and coordinated several trans-NIH Common Fund projects. He also led several extramural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) initiatives, such as the Collaborative Partnership between Research Centers in Minority Institutions and Alcohol Research Centers.

Dr. Joanne Fertig, Health Scientist Administrator in the Medications Development Branch, Division of Treatment and Recovery, retired after 37 years of federal service. Thirty-two of those years were spent at NIAAA. Her contributions to NIAAA's medications development program were substantial. Among Dr. Fertig's many achievements were helping to establish the NIAAA Clinical Investigators Group and NIAAA's medications Investigational New Drug (IND)-enabling program.

Bonnie Hebb, a former Program Specialist in the Administrative Services Branch (ASB), left NIAAA to become a Grants Management Specialist with U.S. Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity at Fort Detrick.

Dr. Raouf M. Kechrid retired after 25 years of federal service. Dr. Kechrid served as the NIAAA Office of Laboratory Animal Science Program Director and Facility Veterinarian, supervising all aspects of the animal care and use program of the Institute. Dr. Kechrid plans to spend time with his family both here and in his native Tunisia.

Elisa Moore retired after 30 years of federal service from the Laboratory of Neurogenetics, DICBR, where she served as an Information Technology Specialist providing technical and professional support for networking and automated data processing. Elisa plans to enjoy her life on the Chesapeake Bay waterfront with her beloved dog Levi.

Departing Postbaccalaureate IRTAs:

- **Joseph Abramovitz** - Section on Neural Circuits
- **Christina Lildharrie** - Laboratory of Neuroimaging
- **Melissa Moss** – Clinical Neuroimaging Research Core
- **Bethany Ngere** – Office of the Scientific Director
- **Victoria Offenberg** - Laboratory of Behavioral and Genomic Neuroscience
- **Sarah Perry** - Laboratory of Behavioral and Genomic Neuroscience
- **Rodrigo Sandon Veliz** - Laboratory of Behavioral and Genomic Neuroscience

RECENTLY ISSUED FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) Issued by NIAAA

Comprehensive Alcohol-HIV/AIDS Research Center: NIAAA supports a broad-based Alcohol Research Centers program to foster and conduct interdisciplinary, collaborative research on the effects of varied patterns of alcohol use and associated alcohol use disorder and the broad impact of alcohol on health and disease at the individual, group, and societal levels. This NOFO uses the NIH Comprehensive Research Center (P60) mechanism to support research center

grants to conduct a range of basic and behavioral cross-cutting, intervention, and translational research in alcohol and HIV/AIDS. These Centers must include a dissemination core to initiate and expand community education related to the activities of the Center. RFA-AA-23-004 (P60). *Contact: Dr. Kendall Bryant*.

Prevention and Intervention Approaches for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD): This initiative encourages research that proposes new prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of FASD and new intervention/treatment strategies for FASD throughout the lifespan. Applications are accepted through either one of two grant mechanisms: R34 planning grant for the initial development of a clinical trial or research project, or R61/R33 exploratory/developmental grant. Through this initiative, NIAAA is interested in developing evidence-based prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of FASD and interventions/treatments to lessen the deficits in individuals affected by prenatal alcohol exposure. PAR-24-067 (R34), PAR-24-068 (R61/R33). *Contacts: Drs. Tatiana Balachova, William Dunty, Elizabeth Powell, Deidra Roach.*

Alcohol Research-Related Resource Award: This NOFO seeks applications for investigator-initiated research resources to support and advance biomedical, behavioral, and social sciences research on a national basis. This NOFO uses the R24 grant mechanism for non-hypothesis-driven activity to provide data, materials, tools, or services that are essential to making timely, high quality, and cost-efficient progress in a field. Applications responding to this NOFO must propose resources designed to provide services to the broad alcohol research community, should not be limited by any specific regional focus, and should be available to any qualified investigator. PAR-24-071 (R24). *Contact: Dr. Gary Murray*.

High-Throughput Screening (HTS) Platform for Discovery of Medications to Treat Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD): Through this new initiative, NIAAA solicits Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) applications from small business concerns (SBCs) for the development of a new, or optimization of an existing, in vivo and/or in vitro high-throughput screening (HTS) platform for use in identifying potential compounds for treating AUD. Potential screening platform assays will consist of small vertebrate (excluding rodent) and invertebrate model organisms as well as human cell- and tissue-based models. The platform assays must be sensitive to different concentrations of alcohol, as well as treatment effects, such that any changes to the model can be measured accurately and reproducibly, and can be used as outcome variables. RFA-AA-24-001 (R43/R44), RFA-AA-24-002 (R41/R42). *Contact: Dr. Sarah Maggio.*

Notices of Special Interest (NOSIs) Issued by NIAAA

Epidemiology and Prevention in Alcohol Research: This NOSI solicits applications to advance basic, applied, translational, and methodological research on the epidemiology and prevention of hazardous alcohol consumption and related behaviors, alcohol use disorder, alcohol-related mortality and morbidity, and other alcohol-related problems and consequences. One prominent objective is to better understand the heterogeneity in developmental trajectories of alcohol use, misuse, and AUD. NOT-AA-23-018. *Contact: Dr. Robert Freeman*.

Encourage Eligible NIH BRAIN Initiative Awardees to Apply for PA-23-189 Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research: This is a multi-Institute and Center NOSI to encourage eligible awardees in the BRAIN Initiative community to apply for

administrative supplements in response to PA-23-189, Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research (Admin Supp - Clinical Trial Not Allowed). The NIH has a strong interest in the diversity of the NIH-funded workforce (see NOT-OD-20-031) and encourages institutions to prioritize inclusion by supporting the participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including individuals from groups identified as underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences. NOT-AA-23-020. *Contact: Dr. Ivana Grakalic*.

Notices Issued by NIAAA

Notice of Intent to Publish: Alcohol-associated Hepatitis Clinical Network – Late Phase Clinical Trials: NIAAA intends to issue limited competition Requests for Application (RFA) announcements to support the continuation of the Alcohol-associated Hepatitis Network (AlcHepNet), which includes clinical research sites and data coordinating centers, funded through RFA-AA-18-002, and RFA-AA-18-004, respectively. The purpose of AlcHepNet is to improve biomedical, psychosocial, and quality of life outcomes for patients with advanced alcohol-associated liver disease. NOT-AA-24-001. *Contact: Dr. Peter Gao*.

Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement for Model Continuums of Care Initiative (MCCI) to Advance Health Equity Among Women and Girls in Racial/Ethnic Minority and Other Marginalized Communities: NIAAA, with other NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs), intends to publish a NOFO to solicit applications to support the planning phase of the new Model Continuums of Care Initiative to Advance Health Equity and End Health Disparities Among Women and Girls in Racial/Ethnic Minority and Other Underserved Communities (MCCI). MCCI is a multi-Institute, Center, and Office implementation and dissemination science initiative to advance health equity and end health disparities in racial/ethnic minority and other underserved women and girls. NOT-AA-24-002. *Contact: Dr. Deidra Roach*.

Updated NIAAA Data and Safety Monitoring Plan Guidelines for NIAAA-Supported Clinical Trials: Through this notice, NIAAA informs applicants of the revised Data and Safety Monitoring Plan guidelines for all extramural NIAAA-funded, NIH-defined clinical trials. NOT-AA-24-002. *Contact: Megan Ryan, MBA*.

NIH-Wide NOSIs, NOFOs and Notices with NIAAA Participation

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE), NOT-AI-23-070.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Availability of Administrative Supplements for BRAIN Initiative Recipients to Support Resource Dissemination, NOT-EB-23-010.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Fundamental Mechanisms and Functions of Co-transmission in the Brain, NOT-MH-24-105.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Translation of BRAIN Initiative Technologies to the Marketplace, NOT-MH-24-115.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Research Supplements to Promote Re-Entry, Re-integration into, and Re-training in Health-Related Research Careers (Admin Supp - Clinical Trial Not Allowed), NOT-OD-23-170.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Administrative Supplements to Recognize Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Mentorship, NOT-OD-24-001.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Administrative Supplement for Research and Capacity Building Efforts Related to Bioethical Issues (Admin Supp Clinical Trial Optional), NOT-OD-24-031.

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Research on the Health of Women of Understudied, Underrepresented and Underreported (U3) Populations (Admin Supp Clinical Trial Optional), NOT-OD-24-032.

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Fellowship for Students at Institutions with NIH-Funded Institutional Predoctoral Dual-Degree Training Programs (Parent F30), PA-23-260.

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Fellowship for Students at Institutions Without NIH-Funded Institutional Predoctoral Dual-Degree Training Programs (Parent F30), PA-23-261.

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Postdoctoral Fellowship (Parent F32), PA-23-262.

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Predoctoral Fellowship to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research (Parent F31-Diversity), PA-23-271.

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Predoctoral Fellowship (Parent F31), PA-23-272.

Competing Revisions to Existing NIH Single Project Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements (Clinical Trial Optional), PA-23-317.

NIH Brain Development Cohorts (NBDC) Biospecimen Access (X01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), PAR-23-229.

Early-stage Biomedical Data Repositories and Knowledgebases (R24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), PAR-23-236.

Enhancement and Management of Established Biomedical Data Repositories and Knowledgebases (U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), PAR-23-237.

Population Approaches to Reducing Alcohol-related Cancer Risk (R01 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-23-244.

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment or Prevention (SBIRT/P) for Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) Use and Misuse in Adult Populations that Experience Health Disparities (R01, Clinical Trial Required), PAR-23-270.

Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health: (R34 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-23-285.; (R01 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-23-298.; (R21 Clinical Trials Optional), PAR-23-299.

Health and Health Care Disparities Among Persons Living with Disabilities (R01 - Clinical Trials Optional), PAR-23-309.

Blueprint Neurotherapeutics Network (BPN): Small Molecule Drug Discovery and Development of Disorders of the Nervous System (UG3/UH3 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-24-043.

Providing Research Education Experiences to Enhance Inclusivity for a Diverse Substance Use and Addiction Scientific Workforce (R25 Clinical Trials Not Allowed), PAR-24-048.

Multi-sectoral Preventive Interventions that Address Social Determinants of Health in Populations that Experience Health Disparities (UG3/UH3, Clinical Trial Required), PAR-24-053.

Pilot and Feasibility Studies in Preparation for Substance Use Prevention Trials (R34 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-24-060.

Phased Research to Support Substance Use Epidemiology, Prevention, and Services Studies (R61/R33 Clinical Trials Optional), PAR-24-062.

Stephen I. Katz Early Stage Investigator Research Project Grant (R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), PAR-24-075; (R01 Basic Experimental Studies with Human Required), PAR-24-076.

Addressing Health and Health Care Disparities among Sexual and Gender Minority Populations (R01 - Clinical Trials Optional), PAR-24-077.

Multidisciplinary Studies of HIV/AIDS and Aging (R01 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-24-091.; (R21 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-24-092.

Adolescent Overdose Prevention and SUD Treatment Initiative (R21 - Clinical Trial Not Allowed), RFA-DA-25-030.

Blueprint Neurotherapeutics Network (BPN): Small Molecule Drug Discovery and Development for Disorders of the Nervous System (U44 Clinical Trial Optional), PAR-24-063.

BRAIN Initiative: Brain-Behavior Quantification and Synchronization Transformative and Integrative Models of Behavior at the Organismal Level (R34 Clinical Trial Optional), RFA-DA-24-042.

BRAIN Initiative: New Concepts and Early-Stage Research for Recording and Modulation in the Nervous System (R21) (Clinical Trial Not Allowed), RFA-EY-23-001.

BRAIN Initiative: Research on the Ethical Implications of Advancements in Neurotechnology and Brain Science (R01 Clinical Trial Optional), RFA-MH-24-190.

BRAIN Initiative: Marmoset Colonies for Neuroscience Research (U24 Clinical Trials Not Allowed), RFA-MH-25-115 and BRAIN Initiative: Marmoset Coordination Center (U24 Clinical Trials Not Allowed), RFA-MH-25-116.

BRAIN Initiative Connectivity across Scales Data Coordinating Center (BRAIN CONNECTS DCC) (U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), RFA-NS-24-028.

HEAL Initiative: HEAL KIDS (Knowledge, Innovation and Discovery Studies) Pain Program Resource and Data Center (U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed), RFA-HD-24-012.

HEAL Initiative: Non-addictive Analgesic Therapeutics Development [Small Molecules and Biologics] to Treat Pain (UG3/UH3 Clinical Trial Optional), RFA-NS-24-019.

HEAL Initiative: Understanding Individual Differences in Human Pain Conditions (R01 - Clinical Trial Optional), RFA-NS-24-021.

HEAL Initiative: Development and Validation of Remote or Patient Wearable Device Derived Objective Biosignatures or Functional Assessments to Monitor Pain for Use as Endpoints in Clinical Trials (UG3/UH3 - Clinical Trial Optional), RFA-NS-24-023.

NIAAA DIRECTOR'S ACTIVITIES

NIAAA Director **George F. Koob, Ph.D.,** gave the following presentations between August – December 2023:

- "The Neurobiology of Alcohol Addiction" as part of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory course on the Neuroscience of Addiction (virtual) on August 11, 2023.
- "Changing the Conversation around Alcohol in the United States – Acknowledging the Elephant in the Room," Mayo Clinic Eau Claire Evening Presentation, Eau Claire, WI on September 19, 2023.
- "Alcohol Use Disorder and Allostasis: The Gain in the Brain is in the Emotional Pain" at Mayo Clinic Grand Round in Eau Claire, WI on September 20, 2023
- "Changing the Conversation around Alcohol in the United States" for the 23rd National Hispanic Science Network (NHSN) Annual International Scientific Conference in Arlington, VA on September 22, 2023.
- "Fire Fighters: Stress, Coping, and Alcohol" for the International Association of Fire Fighters webinar on Exploring Alcohol Use Disorder in the Fire Service: Risks and Recovery (virtual) on September 28, 2023.
- "NIAAA Efforts to Change the Conversation Around Alcohol" at the Yale Conference for Alcohol Research & Education (virtual) on September 30, 2023.
- "Alcohol Misuse" at the Shaping Our Appalachian Region Summit in Corbin, KY on October 4, 2023.
- "Neurobiology of Addiction Revisited: On the Road to Hyperkatifeia, The French Connection" at the France Science Summit on November 6, 2023 (pre-recording).
- "Changing the Conversation about Alcohol: Challenges for NIAAA-INSERM Collaborations" for the NIAAA – INSERM Workshop, Washington DC on November 15, 2023.
- "Alcohol and Aging: Knowing the Risk" for the Sibley Memorial Hospital, Sibley Senior Association (virtual) on November 17, 2023.
- "Alcohol and Addiction Psychiatry – Where Are We Now?" for the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry- Symposium in San Diego, CA on December 8, 2023.

NOTABLE NIAAA STAFF ACTIVITIES

Activities between **August 1 - December 31, 2023:**

Dr. Ralph Hingson presented "Trends and Interventions that Work to Prevent Underage Drinking" at the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Board of Directors, on September 14, 2023.

Dr. Tatiana Balachova presented an Update from the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (ICCFASD) at the 2nd Annual Workshop on FASD sponsored by the Uniform Services University of the Health Services and FASD United, on September 20, 2023. **Dr. Bill Dunty** presented a talk entitled "Alcohol and Pregnancy Research: An NIAAA Update" at this meeting.

Dr. Ralph Hingson joined Vladimir Poznyak of World Health Organization (WHO) for the session, "Intersection of NIAAA efforts with WHO initiatives" at the International Network on Brief Interventions for Alcohol & Other Drugs Conference on September 29, 2023, in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Dr. Bill Dunty presented a talk entitled "Alcohol and Pregnancy Research: An NIAAA Update" at the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists FASD Expert Work Group Annual Meeting in September 2023. **Dr. Tatiana Balachova** presented on ICCFASD and cross-NIH efforts to reduce alcohol and other substance misuse among women at this meeting.

Drs. Ralph Hingson gave a presentation on the "National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: Research Activities and Priorities" at the NIAAA-Cuban Academy of Sciences Meeting on October 18, 2023.

Dr. Laura Kwako gave two presentations at the Addiction Health Services Research conference in New York, NY. The first, entitled "Addiction Health Services Research at NIH: Workshop for Early Career Investigators," was given on October 18, 2023. The second, entitled, "NIH Priorities for Addiction Health Services Research," was given on October 20, 2023.

Dr. Deidra Roach presented at the RTI Global Gender Center (RTI GGC), "Impact of Alcohol on Women: Current Evidence," on October 27, 2023, to share current research findings on harmful drinking among women and girls and NIAAA priorities for future research in this area.

Dr. Sethu Balakathiresan was a panelist at the 2023 Psychological Health Review and Analysis Meeting held on Monday, October 30, 2023, at the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, Fort Detrick, MD to provide programmatic assessment and guidance to enhance research programs related to psychological health.

Dr. Laura Kwako was interviewed for the National Committee for Quality Assurance Inside Health Care podcast in October 2023 along with NIAAA grantee Dr. Kathy Bradley and Division of Treatment and Recovery Advisor Dr. Thekla Ross. The episode encouraged health plan leaders to adopt evidence-based alcohol screening and follow up practices and to use the NIAAA Healthcare Professional's Core Resource on Alcohol as a training resource.

Dr. Deidra Roach organized the Interagency Work Group on Drinking and Drug Use Among Women and Girls Listening Sessions on October 20 and December 15, 2023, to hear from front-line workers regarding their challenges and successes in providing prevention and treatment interventions for girls and women who are at risk for or experiencing harmful alcohol and other substance use.

Dr. Shailesh Kumar organized and moderated a scientific session on “Alcohol and Substance Use Disorder and Glymphatic System” at the National Institute of Drug Abuse-NIAAA Mini-convention held on November 7-8, 2023.

Dr. Elizabeth Powell served as moderator for the press conference, "Understanding the Stressed, Depressed, Adolescent Brain," on November 13, 2023, at Neuroscience 2023, the Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience.

Dr. Joe Wang presented a talk entitled “Biomarker Research for Alcohol-associated Liver Disease (ALD) - A Collaborative Effort of the Research Community and NIAAA” at the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease’s The Liver Meeting on November 13, 2023.

Dr. Tatiana Balachova gave a presentation on the new and renewed cross-NIH programs for the Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health program at the Hawaii Webinar on Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health on November 15, 2023 (virtual).

Dr. Ralph Hingson and **Dr. Svetlana Radaeva** presented “Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research: Research Activities and Priorities,” at the Chinese Association of Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Meeting on November 28, 2023.

Dr. Robert Freeman moderated a session in the NIH Understanding and Addressing the Health Impacts of Online Abuse and Harassment Workshop on December 7-8, 2023. This virtual scientific workshop was hosted to identify gaps, opportunities, and challenges in advancing a research agenda to better understand the clinical, health, and developmental impacts of online harassment and abuse and develop innovative prevention and intervention efforts.

Dr. Li Lin gave a presentation titled, “A Conversation on Alcohol-immune Research and Training” at the Alcohol and Immunology Research Interest Group Meeting on December 8, 2023, at the University of Colorado.

Drs. Brett Hagman and Laura Kwako presented as part of a panel session entitled, “Alcohol and Addiction Psychiatry: Where Are We Now?” that also included Drs. George Koob and Nancy Diazgranados. This session was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry,” on December 8, 2023, in Rancho Bernardo, California. The title of Dr. Hagman’s talk was, "Predicting Principles of Health Behavior Change in Maintenance of Behavior Change in Recovery from DSM-5 AUD." The title of Dr. Kwako’s talk was, “The Healthcare Professional’s Core Resource on Alcohol: Improving Alcohol-Related Care.”

Dr. Deidra Roach participated in M.O.M.S. (Maternal Outcomes Matter Shower) Tour on December 9, 2023, along with **Joan Romaine, Dr. Bridget Williams-Simmons**, and **Dawn Wayman**. The M.O.M.S. Tour aims to improve maternal health outcomes, particularly among African American and American Indian/Alaska Native women, in communities with high maternal mortality and morbidity rates.

Dr. Deidra Roach presented “Impact of Alcohol on Women: Current Evidence” at the Trans-NIH Women’s Health Course on December 19, 2023.

WHAT’S AHEAD?

The Alcohol and the Nervous System Gordon Research Conference will be held in Galveston, TX, February 11-16, 2024. Dr. Koob and several NIAAA investigators and staff will be participating.

The Interagency Coordinating Committee on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (ICCFASD) Fall 2023 Executive Meeting was rescheduled to February 28, 2024 in Bethesda, MD.

The ABCD Insights & Innovations Meeting (AIIM), scheduled for March 4-5, 2024, at the Natcher Auditorium on the NIH main campus in Bethesda, MD and online, will bring together researchers who are leveraging data from the ABCD Study® to share innovative findings and emerging insights about adolescent development.

The 9th International Research Conference on Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, hosted by FASD United, will be held in Seattle, April 11-14,2024. This multidisciplinary conference seeks to connect the identified needs of community workers, healthcare providers, professionals in the FASD field, families, and individuals with FASD with the research community.

NIAAA will host a workshop titled, **Reducing Alcohol-associated Liver Disease Burden through Early Screening and Management in the General Population** on April 17-18, 2024, at the NIH Campus in Bethesda, MD. This workshop will engage experts and stakeholders in a critical evaluation of key components in prevention of severe alcohol-associated liver disease (ALD) through early detection and management, including target patient population selection, current and emerging ALD and alcohol use screening tools and protocols, intervention management, including pharmacotherapy, and pathways of inter-specialty care delivery.

The 47th Annual Research Society on Alcohol Scientific Meeting will be held June 22-26, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

NIAAA SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS AND RESOURCES

Frontiers in Addiction Research Mini-Convention, jointly sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and NIAAA, was held virtually on November 7 and 8, 2023 as a satellite event prior to the Society for Neuroscience annual meeting. Scientific sessions included Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders and the Glymphatic System, Glial Cells and Neuroimmune Mechanisms in Substance Use Disorders, and Using Neuroscience to Inform Prevention Interventions for Substance Use.

NIAAA held a webinar, **Harnessing Technology and Social Media to Address Alcohol Misuse in Adolescents and Emerging Adults** on December 13, 2023, that focused on adolescent alcohol misuse and new prevention and intervention research involving telehealth, social media, and other methods. Presenters included Dr. Maureen Walton, University of Michigan, and Dr. Mai-Ly Steers, Duquesne University.

NIAAA's **Alcohol Policy Information System (APIS)** was updated on December 27, 2023, to include legislative and regulatory changes in state policies pertaining to alcohol and recreational use of cannabis that took effect on or before January 1, 2023. Supplemental resources provided through the APIS website were added or revised.

NIAAA Research Highlights

Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and Cognition at Midlife: Evidence of Fluid Cognition Deficits in Two Cohorts

Significance: This study investigated the effects of prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) later in the lifespan to determine whether cognitive deficits persist beyond early adulthood and into middle age. In two cohorts of middle-aged participants, researchers observed developmental deficits in adults with PAE as measured by performance on four subtests in the NIH Toolbox Cognition Battery. Individuals with PAE with dysmorphic features (indicating a likelihood of higher exposure to alcohol in utero) displayed greater cognitive vulnerabilities. These data suggest that PAE causes persistent cognitive deficits and not a "developmental delay." Individuals with PAE may require continued support during their lifetime.

Abstract: *Background:* Prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) impacts cognition in childhood and early adulthood. Here we evaluate the cognitive abilities of middle-aged adults with and without a history of PAE. *Methods:* Participants (N = 200) were recruited from longitudinal cohorts in the Atlanta and Seattle metropolitan areas and completed measures comprising the National Institutes of Health Toolbox's Fluid Cognition Composite. *Results:* We found that individuals with PAE had lower Fluid Cognition Summary scores and lower Dimensional Change Card Sort and Flanker task subtest scores than non-PAE controls, after accounting for both potentially confounding demographic variables using propensity scores and the effects of study site. When we evaluated the effects of PAE with and without dysmorphic physical features, we found that middle-aged adults in both groups had lower fluid cognition scores than non-PAE controls. However, only the presence of PAE with dysmorphic features was associated with lower performance on the Dimensional Change Card Sort Test and Flanker tasks. *Conclusion:* While all participants with PAE had lower fluid cognition, those with PAE and dysmorphic features also exhibited specific deficits in their performance on measures of inhibition, attention, and cognitive flexibility. Thus, PAE is associated with ongoing cognitive deficits in middle adulthood, which can be observed most clearly among individuals with dysmorphic features.

Shapiro ZR, Kable JA, Grant TM, Stoner SA, Coles CD; CIFASD. Prenatal alcohol exposure and cognition at midlife: Evidence of fluid cognition deficits in two cohorts. Alcohol Clin Exp Res (Hoboken). 2023 Oct;47(10):1978-1988. doi: 10.1111/acer.15177. Epub 2023 Aug 31. PMID: 37864533.

Adolescent Alcohol Exposure Produces Sex-specific Long-term Hyperalgesia via Changes in Central Amygdala Circuit Function

Significance: This study conducted by researchers in the NADIA Consortium suggests that there are sex-dependent effects of chronic adolescent alcohol exposure on pain-related behaviors and neurocircuitry that persist into adulthood. In rats, chronic alcohol exposure in adolescence caused an increased sensitivity to pain during adolescence and into adulthood, even after abstinence, in males but not females. Chronic adolescent alcohol exposure resulted in hyperalgesia in a pain-related brain neurocircuit in adult males, which was reversed by activation of the pain-related brain neurocircuit. Inhibition of the same pain-related brain circuit produced pain hyperalgesia in female rats. These data indicate that the distinct sex-dependent effects of adolescent alcohol misuse may require unique treatment approaches.

Abstract: *Background:* Exposure to alcohol during adolescence produces many effects that last well into adulthood. Acute alcohol use is analgesic, and people living with pain report drinking alcohol to reduce pain, but chronic alcohol use produces increases in pain sensitivity. *Methods:* We tested the acute and lasting effects of chronic adolescent intermittent ethanol (AIE) exposure on pain-related behavioral and brain changes in male and female rats. We also tested the long-term effects of AIE on synaptic transmission in midbrain (ventrolateral periaqueductal gray [vlPAG])-projecting central amygdala (CeA) neurons using whole-cell electrophysiology. Finally, we used circuit-based approaches (DREADDs [designer receptors exclusively activated by designer drugs]) to test the role of vlPAG-projecting CeA neurons in mediating AIE effects on pain-related outcomes. *Results:* AIE produced long-lasting hyperalgesia in male, but not female, rats. Similarly, AIE led to a reduction in synaptic strength of medial CeA cells that project to the vlPAG in male, but not female, rats. Challenge with an acute painful stimulus (i.e., formalin) in adulthood produced expected increases in pain reactivity, and this effect was exaggerated in male rats with a history of AIE. Finally, CeA-vlPAG circuit activation rescued AIE-induced hypersensitivity in male rats. *Conclusions:* Our findings are the first, to our knowledge, to show long-lasting sex-dependent effects of adolescent alcohol exposure on pain-related behaviors and brain circuits in adult animals. This work has implications for understanding the long-term effects of underage alcohol drinking on pain-related behaviors in humans.

Secci ME, Kelley LK, Avegno EM, Holmgren EB, Chen L, Rein SL, Engi SA, Quinlan V, Wilson L, Gilpin NW, Wills TA. Adolescent Alcohol Exposure Produces Sex-Specific Long-term Hyperalgesia via Changes in Central Amygdala Circuit Function. Biol Psychiatry. 2024 Feb 1;95(3):207-219. doi: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2023.09.006. Epub 2023 Sep 16. PMID: 37717844.

Alcohol-tolerant Workplace Environments are a Risk Factor for Young Adult Alcohol Misuse on and off the Job in Australia and the United States

Significance: Alcohol use and misuse tend to peak in young adulthood. Existing interventions for this age group mostly focus on college students, however, in the United States more than half of 18- to 24-year-olds do not attend college. Researchers assessed the availability of alcohol at work, absence of a written alcohol policy, and alcohol-tolerant workplace norms and attitudes, which were each independently associated with a 1.5 to 3 times greater odds of on-the-job alcohol use or impairment. Alcohol-tolerant workplace norms generally were associated with greater young adults' risk for hazardous drinking, independent of on-the job alcohol use or

impairment. The results of this study suggest that the workplace could be an important setting for the prevention and reduction of young adult alcohol misuse.

Abstract: The workplace has been understudied as a setting for the prevention of young adult alcohol misuse. This study examined if alcohol-tolerant workplace environments are associated with greater risk for alcohol use and misuse on and off the job among young adults. Data were collected in 2014 from state-representative, sex-balanced samples (51% female) of 25-year-olds in Washington, U.S. (n = 751) and Victoria, Australia (n = 777). Logistic regressions indicated that availability of alcohol at work, absence of a written alcohol policy, and alcohol-tolerant workplace norms and attitudes were independently associated with a 1.5 to 3 times greater odds of on-the-job alcohol use or impairment. Alcohol-tolerant workplace norms were associated also with greater odds of high-risk drinking generally, independent of on-the-job alcohol use or impairment. Associations were mostly similar in Washington and Victoria, although young adults in Victoria perceived their workplaces to be more alcohol-tolerant and were more likely to use alcohol or be impaired at work and to misuse alcohol generally than young adults in Washington. Cross-nationally, workplace interventions that restrict the availability of alcohol, ban alcohol at work, and reduce alcohol-tolerant norms have the potential to prevent and reduce young adults' alcohol use and misuse on and off the job.

Oesterle S, Bailey JA, Catalano RF, Epstein M, Evans-Whipp TJ, Toumbourou JW. Alcohol-Tolerant Workplace Environments Are a Risk Factor for Young Adult Alcohol Misuse on and off the Job in Australia and the United States. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2023 Sep 7;20(18):6725. doi: 10.3390/ijerph20186725. PMID: 37754585.

High Test-Retest Reliability of the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test-Consumption (AUDIT-C) Questionnaire Completed by Primary Care Patients in Routine Care

Significance: The AUDIT-C is a valid and widely used tool to measure alcohol consumption in adults. This is the first study to demonstrate the test-retest reliability of the AUDIT-C in routine healthcare settings. The reliability of a screening test ensures confidence that it produces consistent and dependable results. This study demonstrated that AUDIT-C screens do have excellent test-retest reliability, including across demographic subgroups and screening modalities (online and in-clinic).

Abstract: *Background:* The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test-Consumption (AUDIT-C) is a three-item screening measure of unhealthy alcohol use that is widely used in healthcare settings. Evidence shows high test-retest reliability of the AUDIT-C in research samples, but most studies had limited external validity and used small samples that could not be used to evaluate reliability across demographic subgroups and/or screening modalities. This study evaluates the test-retest reliability of the AUDIT-C completed in routine care in a large primary care sample, including across demographic subgroups defined by age, sex, race, ethnicity, and screening modality (i.e., completed in-clinic or online). *Methods:* We used electronic health record (EHR) data from Kaiser Permanente Washington. The sample included 18,491 adult primary care patients who completed two AUDIT-C screens 1-21 days apart as part of routine care in 2021. Test-retest reliability was evaluated for AUDIT-C total scores (0-12) and for a binary measure indicating unhealthy alcohol use (scores ≥3 women, ≥4 men). Using previously established cutoffs, we interpreted reliability coefficients >0.75 as indicating "excellent"

reliability. *Results:* AUDIT-C screens completed in routine care and documented in EHRs had excellent test-retest reliability for total scores (ICC = 0.87, 95% CI: 0.87-0.87) and the binary indicator of unhealthy alcohol use (κ = 0.79, 95% CI: 0.78-0.80). Reliability coefficients were good to excellent across all demographic groups and for in-clinic and online modalities. Higher reliability was seen when both screens were completed through online patient portals (ICC = 0.93, 95% CI: 0.93-0.93) versus in-clinic (ICC = 0.81, 95% CI: 0.79-0.82) or when one screen was completed using each modality (ICC = 0.83, 95% CI: 0.82-0.83). Lower reliability was seen in American Indian/Alaska Native (ICC = 0.82, 95% CI: 0.75-0.87) and multiracial individuals (ICC = 0.82, 95% 0.80-0.84). *Conclusions:* In real-world routine care conditions, AUDIT-C screens have excellent test-retest reliability across demographic subgroups and modalities (online and in-clinic). Future research should examine why reliability varies slightly across modalities and demographic subgroups.

Simon CB, McCabe CJ, Matson TE, Oliver M, Bradley KA, Hallgren KA. High test-retest reliability of the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test-Consumption (AUDIT-C) questionnaire completed by primary care patients in routine care. Alcohol Clin Exp Res (Hoboken). 2023 Dec 15. doi: 10.1111/acer.15245. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 38099421.

NIAAA Communications and Public Liaison Activities

News Media

Dr. Koob, along with Dr. Aaron White and other NIAAA scientists, completed 68 media interviews and a Satellite Media Tour from August 2023 through mid-January 2024. Noteworthy stories include those from the TIME Magazine, Washington Post, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, CNN, The New York Times, and NPR.

Highlights

- 'Dry January' Satellite Media Tour – Dr. Koob discussed how people can assess their drinking habits during Dry January. He was featured in interviews with 17 local and national radio and television outlets (see graphic).
- USA Today, Is your 'holiday buzz' impacting your kids? Remember: 'They're constantly watching' – Dr. Koob discussed the influence of parental drinking.
- TIME Magazine, How to Be a Healthier Drinker – Dr. Koob spoke about making healthier decisions regarding alcohol.
- CNN, Matthew Perry went to rehab 15 times before getting sober. Here's why it's so hard –

- CNN, Matthew Perry went to rehab 15 times before getting sober. Here's why it's so hard – Dr. Nancy Diazgranados spoke about why some people struggle with staying sober.
- Washington Post, Women Are Drinking More Alcohol and It's Killing Them **–** Dr. Koob discussed the increase in rates of drinking and drinking-related deaths among women.
- NPR, Ozempic seems to curb cravings for alcohol. Here's what scientists think is going on – Dr. Lorenzo Leggio discussed preclinical findings that suggest that GLP-1 agonists may reduce people's consumption of alcohol or nicotine.
- Wall Street Journal, Women's Problem Drinking Is Catching Up to Men's – Dr. Aaron White discussed the health impacts of alcohol in women.
- PR Newswire – NIAAA distributed: Fall Semester – A Time for Parents to Discuss the Risks of College Drinking, and The Truth About Holiday Spirits.

News stories and NIAAA Director's blogs

- September 2023 – International FASD Awareness Day is September 9th
- September 2023 – In Memoriam: Sally M. Anderson, Ph.D.
- September 2023 – In Memoriam: Dr. George Robert Siggins
- December 2023 – Director's Blog: Kicking off the new year with Dry January? Here are six tips for success

Major Activities, Events, and Products

- **NIAAA Facts About Teen Drinking** – Provides research-based information for teens on how alcohol affects health, how to identify signs of a problem, and where to get help.
- **NIAAA for Middle School** – Contains interactive activities to help adults discuss drinking with middle schoolers.
- **NIAAA quiz on Kahoot! –** NIAAA created a quiz on underage drinking to help high school students and teachers better understand teen drinking.
- **NIAAA Liaison Group Virtual Roundtable –** Dr. Koob discussed the state of NIAAA and Friends of NIAAA Chair Dr. Bill Wieczorek discussed their plans for 2024.

NIAAA Educational Resources

Top NIAAA resources:

- Publications ordered: Rethinking Drinking, Harmful Interactions, Make a Difference: Talk to Your Child About Alcohol
- Publications viewed online: Alcohol Overdose, Alcohol Use Disorder, Underage Drinking
- Webpages: Alcohol's Effects on the Body, Drinking Levels Defined, NIAAA Main Homepage

New and updated resources:

- Telehealth Options for Alcohol Treatment (also available in Spanish) – This new fact sheet describes the availability of telehealth options for alcohol treatment, which have greatly expanded in recent years.
- New infographics on Alcohol Facts and Statistics – Impact of Alcohol and Opioids in the United States, Deaths Involving Alcohol Are Increasing, Prevalence, Risks, and Consequences of Alcohol Use in the United States.

Social Media Highlights

NIAAA's X account (formerly Twitter; @NIAAAnews) currently has almost 30,000 followers (0.6% increase since July 31), NIAAA's Instagram account (@NIAAAnews) has more than 4,000 followers (9% increase), and NIAAA's Facebook (@NIAAAgov) has more than 3,300 followers (9% increase).

Highlights from social media:

- NIAAA and NIDAMED joined the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) in the End Stigma Day X conversation as part of National Addiction Treatment Week, with NIAAA posts garnering over 6,000 impressions.
- NIAAA engaged in social media campaigns for major health observances, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month (garnering around 11,500 impressions), Recovery Month (7,300 impressions), and Sober October (18,000 impressions).
- NIAAA partnered with six social media influencers (with a total of about 547,000 followers) to create 67 posts to reach parents of college students (2.2 million impressions).

Notable Pickup of NIAAA Content

- HHS/NIH
    - NIH Newsletter (December) featured The Truth About Holiday Spirits.
    - NIH Catalyst highlighted Dr. David Lovinger in Polishing a Diamond in the Rough.
    - NIH 'I Am Intramural' blog highlighted a research team led by Dr. Hee-Yong Kim in Experimental Treatment Helps Neurons Recover from Damage.
    - Honoring Health Newsletter (NIH Tribal Health Research Office) featured Alcohol and Your Brain: A Virtual Reality Experience.
    - NIH homepage rotator featured NIAAA messages on fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, holiday drinking, and Dry January.
    - HHS posted on X with a link to The Truth About Holiday Spirits.
    - HHS Office on Women's Health highlighted NIAAA resources in a post on X.
    - Dr. Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, posted about NIAAA resources on X.
    - SAMHSA reposted a NIAAA Dry January animation with links to Rethinking Drinking.
- CADCA Coalitions Online spotlighted NIAAA resources during Recovery Month.