## **June 2024**



## The International Consortium of Universities for Drug Demand Reduction

## NEWSLETTER



## From The Desk of Executive Director Kevin P. Mulvey, PhD

The Annual ICUDDR Conference and training events in partnership with ISSUP and ISSSUP Greece, "The Art of Healing: A New Era in Substance Use Prevention, Harm Reduction, Treatment, and Recover Support" wrapped up Friday evening in Thessaloniki, Greece.

ICUDDR Members, what Dear Substance Prevention. Support" wrapped up Friday evening in Embassy Thessaloniki, Greece.

remarks from Mrs. Margaret H. Nardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Director of the Office of Global Programs and Policy. We also heard from dignitaries of Thessaloniki, Stelios Angeloudis.

just under 1,000 participants joining us in person from across the globe. ICUDDR them in a future newsletter. hosted one of the plenary keynote sessions and 16 educational sessions. making up a total of 67 presentations. The presentations covered topics around the science and issues within the harm reduction, prevention, treatment, and recovery support landscape.

In addition to the conference events'. staff from the ICUDDR Global office participated in various meetings and discussions.

an On Monday, members from ICUDDR and amazing week!!! The Annual ICUDDR others participated in a one-day meeting Conference and training events in for the Regional Working Group in Latin partnership with ISSUP and ISSUP America and Caribbean, OAS|CICAD. I Greece, "The Art of Healing: A New Era in had the opportunity to also participate in Harm the State Department Drug Demand Reduction, Treatment, and Recover Reduction meetings with invited US Staff. The International Technology Transfer Centers. We had an exceptional opening with component of ICUDDR, took part in a 2day side meeting.

The ICUDDR Board of Directors also had their annual meeting and set the tone and strategic direction for the next 5 years. from our host country such as the This edition of the newsletter will show Deputy Minister of Health and the Mayor highlights of the conference. The July edition will have a more complete report There were over 1,400 registrations with on the conference. When we have the conference survey results, we will present

> A huge thank you to our staff members and interns for their exceptionally hard work in planning and executing this conference. A standing ovation to ISSUP and ISSUP Greece, without whose support and collaboration, we would not have had such a successful event.

> > Kevin Mulvey

#### What you'll find:

From the Desk of the Executive Director ...

**New Members** 

Meet ICUDDR Staff Member: Ashley Becker

**Upcoming Trainings &** Events

June Review: Education & Training

**ICUDDR Global Conference 2024 Highlights** 

**ICUDDR** Scientific Column

**Regional Activities** 

**ITTC Update** 

**GCCC Updates** 

New Updates & Resources added to the **ICUDDR** Website

Connect with ICUDDR

# welcome! New members of the ICUDDR Family!

As of June 23rd, we have **452 Institutions** consisting of **734 Faculty Members** from Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, the United States, and Canada.

This month, we welcome 4 new Universities:

- Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Peru
- Universidade Regional Integrada do Alto Uruguai e das Missões, Brazil
- Universidad Nacional de Lanús, Argentina
- Chuka University, Kenya

# Meet ICUDDR Staff Member: **Ashley Becker**



Ashley Becker, MPA, is the Program Officer with ICUDDR Global Center for Credentialing and Certification. She is an experienced nonprofit professional with over thirteen years of experience in international and local organizations; focused on the use of digital platforms to support overall organizational goals. Ashley holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Clemson University and a BA in Journalism/Broadcasting from Oklahoma State University. She currently serves as a Programme Officer for the Global Centre for Credentialing and Certification (GCCC) where her primary focus is overseeing the management and

development of the organization's website, maintaining the credentialing application portal including the issuing of credentialing results, preparing analytics reports, and offering support in credential development initiatives. She strives to contribute to the overall growth of GCCC's mission globally and ensure a professionalized workforce to address challenges related to alcohol and drug demand reduction.

## **Upcoming Trainings & Events**

#### Live Webinar

Part 5 of the Pharmacology Webinar Series:

# K2/Spice: Learning About Synthetic Cannabinoids

The increasing availability of synthetic cannabinoids warrants a further understanding. Join us on **July 15, 9:00 to 10:15 AM EST** for the K2/Spice: Learning about Synthetic Cannabinoids webinar. Mr Andrew Kurts from UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs will discuss the compound, its side effects, and how this information is useful in delivering behavioral health services.



Andrew Kurtz, MA, LMFT

Clinical Specialist, UCLA Integrated
Substance Abuse Programs
Pacific Southwest Addiction
Technology Transfer Center (ATTC)

**Register Here** 



#### 20-Hour Statistical Workshop

## Fundamentals of Statistics in R

ICUDDR is proud to offer a 20-hour Fundamentals on R Statistic Workshop. This will be facilitated by Dr. Janaka Kosgolla of the University of Illinois. R is a free open source statistical programming that can be used for data cleaning, analysis & visualization.

The workshop will be held on August 6-8, 13-15, from 9:00 PM -12:00 AM (EST), and 9:00 -11:00 PM on August 20. Check the timing of your own time zone <u>here</u>.

Registration to come. Don't miss this rare opportunity.

Registration to come

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## June Review: Education & Trainings

#### 2024 NIDA International Forum

ICUDDR staff attended the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) International Program for the 2024 NIDA International Forum, held June 14–15, 2024 in Montreal, Canada.

The Forum research symposium, poster session, and network-building activities focus on the range and quality of drug use and addiction research conducted around the world. This year, ICUDDR partners presented "Advancing Quality in Addiction Studies Programs." Presenters were Victor Capoccia, Technical Assistance Collaborative; Dennis McCarty, Oregon Health & Science University; Amalie Lososová, First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and General University Hospital, Czech Republic; and Jordan Turner, a former ICUDDR Intern and recent MPH graduate. Carly Searcy was the panel chair.



**Pictured from right to left:** Janet Penn, Carly Searcy, Amalie Lososová, Jordan Turner, Dennis McCarty, and Victor Capoccia

Part 4 in the Pharmacology Webinar Series:

## **Navigating Ketamine**

On June 3rd, Dr. Howard Cohen, MD, gave an informative presentation on ketamine. This webinar was part of our Pharmacology Series. Participants learned key information about ketamine, tools for screening, and how this information is useful in delivering behavioral health services. If you were unable to attend, we encourage you to watch the recording.



<u>If you missed it, watch the recording here</u>

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## The Art of Healing

Thessaloniki, Greece

A new era in substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support

#### **Monday & Tuesday Pre-Conference Meetings/Trainings**





















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## The Art of Healing

Thessaloniki, Greece

A new era in substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support

#### **Conference Events**







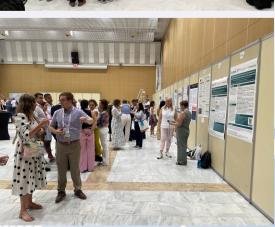
























## **The Art of Healing**

Thessaloniki, Greece

A new era in substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support

#### **Conference Events**













#### **Conference Educational Sessions**





















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## The Art of Healing

Thessaloniki, Greece

A new era in substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support

#### **Conference Connections**































Many thanks to all who joined us and made this conference possible! More to come in July's Newsletter....

## **ICUDDR Scientific Column**

#### Understanding Substance Use Among Adolescents and Young Adults: A Growing Concern

Sungjoo Park & Hala Najm, R.Ph, MPH



Substance use among young adults remains a significant public health challenge globally. According to data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and various peer-reviewed journals[1,3], the use of alcohol, marijuana, and other substances among young people is rising, posing substantial risks to their health and development. In fact, in Africa, 70 percent of people in treatment are under the age of 35[1].

Building on our previous edition of the scientific column in the newsletter about the critical importance of preventing youth from engaging in vaping and e-cigarette use, we now broaden our focus to address a broader spectrum of substance use among young people. While vaping and e-cigarettes pose significant health risks, they are part of a larger pattern of substance experimentation that includes marijuana, alcohol, and other drugs[2]. Understanding the prevalence and impact of these substances is essential for developing comprehensive prevention strategies and ensuring the well-being of our youth. This edition of the scientific column delves into the latest research on these substances, shedding light on their growing trends among adolescents (10-19 years) and youth (15-24 years).

#### Marijuana Use

Cannabis, also known as marijuana, is one of the most widely used substances globally [4]. The legal status of cannabis varies across different countries and regions. While marijuana use is typically illegal worldwide, decriminalization is becoming more common. Various parts of the world, including the Netherlands, Portugal, and parts of Australia, have decriminalized its use[3]. In addition, Canada, Uruguay, and Malta are the only 3 countries to have legalized recreational use of cannabis at the national level[3].

This widespread and growing legalization of cannabis has been associated accelerated daily use and related economic and health impacts, especially among young adults[3]. Legalization has led to an increase in tax revenues in various countries and a reduction in incarceration and arrest rates for possessing cannabis[3]. Thus, advocates for pro-legalization posit that benefits include increasing regulatory control over product distribution, weakening organized crime, reducing burden and inequality in the criminal justice system, and generating economic benefits, such as tax benefits and commercial activity[1,4]. Many states in the U.S., for example, allocate marijuana tax revenue to reimburse regulatory agencies. Education and public health institutions are also among these beneficiaries[5]. However, despite these economic gains, there have also been concurrent social costs. An legalizing marijuana recreational use on U.S. state-average economic and social outcomes found that substance use disorders. chronic homelessness, and arrests increased by 17%, 35%, and 13%, respectively[6]. Other literature suggests that excessive marijuana use may lead to adverse effects on health,

human capital, and socioeconomic outcomes[7].

Recently, there has been a trend towards more positive perceptions of marijuana use among adolescents and youth overall[8]. This trend in positive perception may be due to increased exposure to promarijuana sentiment through social media and advertising[9]. A cohort study of 8000 youth with a mean age of 13 conducted in the U.S. observed an association between sixth and eighth-graders' exposure to marijuana through media and intentions to use marijuana a year later[10]. In terms of adverse effects of the legalization of marijuana on its use among adolescents, there have been associations with lower educational attainment and cognitive increased functioning[11]. risk developing marijuana dependence, amplified risk of developing psychotic illnesses, and a higher rate of engaging in risky behaviors[12]. Another health-related co-use/co-administration relationship tobacco between marijuana[13]. Furthermore, adolescents and youth tend to view marijuana use as safer than alcohol use. Other challenges to addressing marijuana use increased potency and varying forms, such as vapes and edibles. This ever-evolving landscape warrants further consideration towards prevention and intervention.

#### Other substances

The debate over whether marijuana acts as a gateway drug, especially among young adults, persists. However, substantial research suggests that young adults who use marijuana are more likely to experiment with other illicit substances. This tendency is influenced by socioenvironmental conditions, individual predispositions, peer influence, and drug availability, with peer influence and availability being particularly crucial in this progression[14,15,16,17].

<sup>[1]</sup> UNODC. (2023, June 23). UNODC World Drug Report 2023 warns of converging crises as illicit drug markets continue to expand. United Nations: Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/press/releases/2023/June/unodc-world-drug-report-2023-warns-of-converging-crises-as-illicit-drug-markets-continue-to-expand.html

<sup>[2]</sup> Najm, H. (2024, May). ICUDDR may 2024. ICUDDR. Retrieved 2024, from https://www.icuddr.com/aboutus/newsletter.aspx.

<sup>[3]</sup> UNODC. (2022). UNODC world drug report 2022 highlights trends on cannabis post-legalization, environmental impacts of illicit drugs, and drug use among women and youth. United Nations: Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/frontpage/2022/june/unodc-world-drug-use-among-women-and-youth.html [4] Bahji, A., & Stephenson, C. (2019). International Perspectives on the Implications of Cannabis Legalization: A Systematic Review & Thematic Analysis. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 16(17), 3095. https://doi.org/10.3390/jierph16173095

<sup>[5]</sup>Zvonarev, V., Fatuki, T. A., & Tregubenko, P. (2019). The Public Health Concerns of Marijuana Legalization: An Overview of Current Trends. Cureus. https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.5806

<sup>[6]</sup> Anderson, D. M., & Rees, D. I. (2023). The Public Health Effects of Legalizing Marijuana. Journal of Economic Literature, 61(1), 86–143. https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.20211635
[7] Chu, Y.-W. L., & Gershenson, S. (2018). High Times: The effect of medical marijuana laws on student time use. Economics of Education Review, 66, 142–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2018.08.003

<sup>[7]</sup> City, r.-w. L., & destriction, s. (2016). Figh Times. The effect of medical marijuana laws on student time use. Economics of Education Review, 66, 142–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2016.08.003 [8] Kosterman, R., Bailey, J. A., Guttmannova, K., Jones, T. M., Eisenberg, N., Hill, K. G., & Hawkins, J. D. (2016). Marijuana Legalization and Parents' Attitudes, Use, and Parenting in Washington State. Journal of Adolescent Health, 59(4), 450–456. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.07.004

## ICUDDR Scientific Column cont.

#### Cont...

Additionally, neurobiological studies indicate that early marijuana use can alter brain development, increasing susceptibility to substances[17]. development, susceptibility increasing other substances[17].

In the past decade, **alcohol consumption** among young adults has shown a mixed trend. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) in the United States, there has been a general decline in the frequency of past-year, past-month, and daily drinking among young adults. However, high-intensity drinking, defined as consuming ten or more drinks in a row, has steadily increased, reaching the highest levels ever recorded in 2021[18]. This indicates a shift towards more extreme drinking behaviors among a subset of young adults. Alcohol consumption during adolescence and early adulthood particularly concerning due to the critical brain development occurring during this period. Studies have shown that alcohol cam disrupt the formation of neural connections, leading to cognitive deficits, memory problems, and an increased risk developing alcohol use disorder later in life[19]. Among individuals aged 20-39 years. approximately 13.5% of total deaths are attributable to alcohol[20].

Moreover, global trends in opioid use among young adults have shown concerning trajectories in the past decade, with a notable increase in misuse and associated adverse outcomes. Regions such as North America, Europe, and parts of Asia have experienced rising rates of opioid-related fatalities and

substance disorders among youth[21,22,23]. Factors contributing to this phenomenon include the widespread availability of prescription opioids, cultural norms influencing pain management practices, and the emergence of potent illicit opioids like fentanyl[21,22].

Efforts to address these trends have emphasized the implementation of stricter opioid prescribing guidelines, expansion of evidence-based treatment modalities, and educational campaigns targeting both young individuals and healthcare providers[23,21]. Despite these initiatives, the persistent complexity of misuse opioid among vounger demographics necessitates sustained global efforts integrating prevention, treatment, and harm reduction strategies[21,23].

#### Conclusion

The rising trend of substance use among adolescents and young adults represents a multifaceted public health challenge that requires immediate and comprehensive action. The increasing prevalence marijuana, alcohol, and opioid use among youth is influenced by various socioenvironmental factors, individual predispositions, and evolving legal landscapes. The legalization and marijuana, while decriminalization of providing economic benefits, also contribute to greater accessibility and normalization of use, potentially leading to higher rates of experimentation with other illicit substances. Furthermore, the co-use of substances like tobacco and marijuana, alongside increasing potency and variety consumption methods. complicates prevention and intervention efforts.

Efforts to curb these trends must integrate

strict regulatory frameworks, extensive public education campaigns, and accessible treatment options. Fostering a nuanced understanding of the risks associated with early substance use is essential for developing effective prevention strategies. As the legal and social environments surrounding these substances continue to evolve, ongoing research and adaptive policy measures will be crucial in safeguarding the health and development of young people worldwide.



Sungioo Park is a 2nd-year MPH student at George Mason University with a concentration in Global Health currently completing a practicum with ICUDDR.



**Dr. Hala Naim** is a registered pharmacist with a master's degree in public health and a Fullbright Humphrey fellowship in SUD prevention, treatment and recovery at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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## Regional Activities

## **Europe**

#### **Europe Regional Meeting**

ICUDDR Europe, led by Dr. Michal Miovsky, held their quarterly regional meeting via Zoom on June 6th. It was a great discussion on recent work on quality standards, collaboration with Addictology, and other work happening throughout the region.

If you are an ICUDDR member in Europe and are interested in attending these meetings, please contact Kaleb Brooks at brooksk@icuddr.org.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 19th at 15:00 Brussels time.

#### **Recent Publication**

ICUDDR Member in Slovenia and Director of UTRIP, Matej Košir, recently published the article, <u>A growing need for advocacy skills and knowledge in promoting population health and well-being:</u>
<u>Recommended strategies for alcohol prevention advocacy</u>, in the International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research.

Public health advocacy plays a crucial role in promoting and protecting the health and well-being of communities. It involves the efforts of individuals, organizations, communities, and coalitions to influence public health policies, practices, and systems to address health disparities, improve health outcomes, and create healthier environments. Advocacy strategies used in public health include raising awareness about health issues, mobilizing communities, engaging policy- and decision-makers and media, and influencing legislation. Public health advocates utilize various communication channels, such as traditional and social media, and community forums, to disseminate information and build support for their cause. They also collaborate with stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community leaders, to amplify their impact. Public health advocacy has been successful in achieving significant improvements in health outcomes. Examples include the adoption and implementation of smoke-free policies, the adoption of evidence-based alcohol strategy and policy, such as the WHO Global Alcohol Action Plan (2022-2030), and many more. However, challenges exist, such as lack of advocacy knowledge and skills among public health workforce, resistance from powerful interest groups (e.g., unhealthy industries), limited resources, and the need for sustained efforts to address complex health issues. In conclusion, public health advocacy is a vital component of efforts to improve population health. It involves advocating for policies and practices that address the social determinants of health and promote health equity. Public health advocates can create positive change and contribute to healthier communities. Continued support and investment in public health advocacy are therefore essential.

Click here to read the full article



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## **ITTC Update**

The ITTC Network is excited to announce four new ITTCs! Each of these new centers will bring a new and unique perspective to the network.

- Argentina ITTC directed by Dr. Roberto Canay, will be located in the Facultad de Ciencias Humanas in the Universidad del Museo Social Argentino (UMSA) in Buenos Aires
- India ITTC directed by Dr. Yatan Pal Singh Balhara located in the National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi
- Korea ITTC directed by Dr. Nami Kim, located in the Department of Addiction Science at Sahmyook University in Seoul
- Spain ITTC co-directed by Dr. Juan Carlos Valderrama Zurián and Dr. Antonio Vidal and four universities are participating in the Spain ITTC: University of Valencia (lead university), University of Miguel Hernández of Alicante, Catholic University of Valencia San Vicente Mártir, and Valencian International University

Please join us in celebrating these new additions!



# Connect with the ITTC's Network Coordinating Office

International Technology Transfer Center (ITTC) Network for Drug Demand Reduction develops and strengthens workforce, organizations, and systems that provide substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Based in universities and research centers, utilize a variety of strategies to accelerate the use of scientifically-based culturally appropriate practices.

Network The ITTC Coordinating Office based at the University of Missouri, Kansas City (UMKC) works in partnership with International Consortium of <u>Universities</u> on Drug Demand Reduction (ICUDDR) to unite the Centers into a mutually supportive network. Some benefits of being an ITTC are the connections to a strong network of drug demand reduction experts and the opportunity to collaborate closely with professionals around the world. The ITTC Network provides ongoing development opportunities for its members through various modalities.

www.ittcnetwork.org







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## **GCCC Update**



The Global Centre for Credentialing and Certification (GCCC), in collaboration with NAADAC and the National Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals (NCC AP), offers qualified test-takers the opportunity to sit for all four levels of ICAP treatment examinations using online remote proctoring. This allows candidates to take the exam on a computer in their home or office while being proctored via webcam by an online live proctor in a different location.

In June 2024, 171 addiction professionals from Pakistan were registered for the Treatment I, II, III, and IV online remote-proctored examinations under the sponsorship of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Pakistan.

Additionally, GCCC offered ICAP treatment and prevention in-person paper-and-pencil examinations on June 29, 2024, in Thessaloniki, Greece, as part of the ICUDDR Global Conference.

GCCC wishes success to all candidates taking both online and in-person exams!

#### Resources added to ICUDDR Website

#### DID YOU KNOW?

ICUDDR has 350+ resources in its collection of journal articles, curricula, brochures, tools, webinars and more. The list can be filtered by resource type and/or topic.



#### **New Journal Article**

# Are We Doing What is Necessary to Prevent and Reduce Alcohol Consumption?

Jorge Ameth Villatoro Velázquez, Marycarmen Noemí Bustos Gamiño, Nancy Amador Buenabad, María de Lourdes Gutiérrez López, Raquel Mondragón Gómez, María Elena Medina-Mora Icaza

During COVID-19, several information sources showed an overall decrease in alcohol consumption in areas of Mexico. While more study participants decreased their drinking than increased, some participants did increase alcohol consumption during this time. Those who increased consumption exhibited higher rates of anxiety and depression. This article examines binge drinking, or "pre-gaming," among adolescents, and discusses both parental and socioeconomic factors linked to increased alcohol consumption among youth.

On the international level, PAHO has utilized the SAFER strategy to lower the consumption of alcohol. They implemented a strategy to strengthen the restriction on availability of alcohol, promoted against alcohol consumption, had treatments and screening availabile, enforced bans on advertisement on alcohol, promotion, and increased alcohol tax prices.

<u>Click here to read the article</u>



### Do you want to join the ICUDDR Consultant Registry?

If you have expertise to share and are interested in consulting opportunities with ICUDDR, please complete our short form at: https://forms.gle/PqKXK1jnE2heXikKA

### **Call for Teaching Manual Resources**

Do you have course materials including syllabi, assignments, and worksheets that you'd be willing to share? Submit your materials for review and potential compilation into a resource manual for members by course.

Send them to info@icuddr.org

#### Did you publish a journal article?

Did you publish a journal article in the field of Prevention, Treatment, or Recovery?

If you did publish an article in a journal, please share it with us by emailing it to Info@icuddr.org, and we will help promote your work.

## Connect with ICUDDR

















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