

From: [APA Communications](#)
To: lpmastaff@jgma.net
Subject: APA Headlines: Public Health Officials Urge Physicians Not To Overlook Medications When Treating Alcohol Abuse Problems
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Good morning Ms Cathy Thompson

October 3, 2016

Leading The News

Public Health Officials Urge Physicians Not To Overlook Medications When Treating Alcohol Abuse Problems.

[Kaiser Health News](#) (10/3, Yasinski) reports that public health officials suggest that naltrexone and acamprosate are “often overlooked” by physicians seeking to help patients “battle alcohol abuse problems.” According to National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism director George Koob, “We want people to understand we think AA is wonderful, but there are other options. Let a thousand flowers bloom, anything helps.” The NIAAA “has developed a branch dedicated to development of medications and is supporting” clinical trials of medications to provide patients and physicians “more options” to treat alcohol abuse. Koob adds that naltrexone and acamprosate “are very safe medications” which have demonstrated effectiveness.

Psychiatric News Alert



[Experts Suggest Cautious Response to a Study Linking Contraceptives and Depression](#)

[Multimodal Diagnostic Approach May Improve Ability to Predict Transition to Psychosis](#)

What can news anchors teach you about treating patients via telepsychiatry?

Dr. Peter Yellowlees discusses this unlikely source of inspiration in this part of the APA's Telepsychiatry Toolkit. [Watch the video.](#)

APA's [Telepsychiatry Toolkit](#) is an evolving resource for members who want to learn about the various aspects of telepsychiatry, including clinical, training and policy considerations. See more videos on other telepsychiatry specifics from APA experts, as well as other telepsychiatry resources, on the online APA [Telepsychiatry Toolkit](#).



Psychiatric Treatment/Disorders

Study Uses Known Genetic Risk Factors To Score Individuals On Their Relative Risk Of Developing Alzheimer's At A Given Age.

The [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) (9/30, Fikes) reported that “a new study...proposes to deepen the knowledge by using known genetic risk factors to score individuals on their relative risk of developing Alzheimer's at a given age.” The methodology “yields what's called a polygenic hazard score, or PHS.” Researchers found that individuals “in the top one percent of risk develop Alzheimer's three decades earlier than those in the bottom one percent” after analyzing “genetic information from tens of thousands of

people,” then examining “the genetic details of 20,680 people that were taken from sources such as the Alzheimer’s Disease Neuroimaging Initiative and the National Institute on Aging.” The [findings](#) were “posted in September on the BioRxiv website, which allows an early look at biological research before it is officially published.”

Government and Psychiatry

Affordable Care Act May Have To Change To Survive.

The [New York Times](#) (10/2, A1, Pear, Subscription Publication) reports on its front page that while the Affordable Care Act “was supposed to put an end” to the fight for a healthcare system that insures all Americans, “the law’s troubles could make it just a way station on the road to another, more stable health care system.” According to the Times, the healthcare proposals of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump show the ACA “will almost certainly have to change to survive.” The Times says Clinton is joining President Obama and much of her party by “calling for more government, not less.” Meanwhile, the Times adds that Trump and congressional Republicans “would go in the direction of less government” by “reducing federal regulation and requirements so insurance would cost less and no-frills options could proliferate.” Both parties agree that for many, the health plans in the individual marketplace are “still too expensive and inaccessible.”

Psychiatry and Public Health



Pilot Community Paramedic Program Helps Patients In Mental Health Crisis Bypass The Emergency Department.

In an investigative piece, the [Modesto \(CA\) Bee](#) (10/2, Tracy) reported that “California’s Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, through a pilot program, is allowing five” paramedics with American Medical Response “in Stanislaus County to sidestep state regulation to help better serve” people with mental illnesses “and ease the burden on overcrowded emergency departments” by taking such patients “directly to the county’s” mental health “crisis center.” Now “called community paramedics, the senior AMR paramedics taking part in the program were selected by a panel of health officials and underwent nearly 200 hours of additional training.” Similar programs are “already in place in several states like Texas and North Carolina.”

Opinion: Administration, Congress Should Take Ownership Of Veteran Suicide Issue.

In an opinion piece for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/2, Morgenthau, Subscription Publication), attorney and WWII veteran Robert M. Morgenthau calls on Congress and the Administration to take responsibility of veterans’ suicide rate being about double that of the general population. He applauds the work being done in many areas of the Department of Veterans Affairs in helping many veterans deal with mental health issues and PTSD. However, the rate of suicide among veterans has remained unchanged and the VA has not been able to meet the needs of those it serves, Morgenthau asserts, calling for allowing veterans to access civilian mental-health services and improving treatment by expanding both public and private partnerships.

Venezuelan Psychiatric Wards Challenged By Food, Medication, And Medical Supply Shortages.

On its front page, the [New York Times](#) (10/2, A1, Casey, Subscription Publication) reported that Venezuela “has run out of the vast majority of psychiatric medicines, leaving families and” physicians “powerless to help them, medical experts say.” Many foreign pharmaceutical companies “stopped sending medicines because the government owed them so much money.” As a result, approximately “85 percent of psychiatric medicines are now unavailable in Venezuela, according to the country’s top pharmaceutical

trade group.”

In a related piece, the [New York Times](#) (10/2, Kohut, Casey, Subscription Publication) reported that six of its journalists analyzed conditions at six Venezuelan psychiatric wards and observed food and medicine shortages in all facilities. The Times particularly focused on the state-run El Pampero Hospital in Barquisimeto, which reported nearly depleted stocks of sedatives, tranquilizers, medicines, personal-care items, clothing, and cleaning supplies. The Times pointed that the Venezuelan government has denied the shortages and has also refused medical aid from international sources on multiple occasions.

APA in the News

Hormonal Contraceptives Appear To Be Associated With An Increased Risk For Depression, Study Suggests.

In continuing coverage, the [New York Times](#) (9/30, Bakalar, Subscription Publication) reported, “Hormonal contraceptives are associated with an increased risk for depression,” researchers found after studying “more than a million women ages 15 to 34, tracking their contraceptive and antidepressant use from 2000 to 2013,” and excluding “women who before 2000 had used antidepressants or had another psychiatric diagnosis.” The large study also revealed that “the risk was greater in adolescent girls, but this may be because adolescent girls are especially susceptible to depression.” The [findings](#) were published online Sept. 28 in JAMA Psychiatry.

[Psychiatric News](#) (9/30) reported, “Former APA President Nada Stotland, MD,” MPH, “said the findings should not result in precipitate action by patients or their physicians.” Even though “the effects are significant, clinicians must compare them to what could happen if women were not on hormonal contraceptives, she added.”

Friday's Lead Stories

- [Knowing They Have A Family History Of Breast Cancer Or High-Risk Genetic Mutation May Not Lead To Increased Anxiety, Depression In Teen Girls.](#)
- [Four Traits May Put Children At Risk For Addiction, Program Indicates.](#)
- [Medicare Announces New Goal For Reducing Preventable Problems In Hospitals.](#)
- [FDA Places Hold On Experimental AD/HD Medication.](#)
- [HHS Finds Decline In Uninsured Across All Groups.](#)

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