

NIH initiative aims to address opioid misuse over long term

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(HealthDay)—A novel, innovative initiative is being developed to help

end addiction over the long term, according to a viewpoint article published online June 12 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Md., and colleagues describe the new NIH initiative, Helping to End Addiction Long-Term (HEAL).

The authors note that the interdisciplinary program will focus on two primary areas: improving treatment for [opioid misuse](#) and addiction and improving strategies for [pain management](#). HEAL will work on developing new treatments for addiction, including identifying new targets, developing new medications, and reformulating existing medicines. In addition, effective treatment for addiction should be optimized. The Advancing Clinical Trials in Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome pilot trial should be expanded in order to determine the best approaches for treatment. Pain management could be enhanced by research to develop a better understanding of [chronic pain](#) and development of new non-addictive pain treatments. To speed movement of non-addictive treatments through the clinical pipeline, a public-private HEAL partnership is planned.

"HEAL will focus on a range of objectives, from short-term goals to research priorities that will take longer to bear fruit," the authors write. "Yet, all will be aimed at the same ultimate vision: a nation of people with far less disabling pain and opioid [addiction](#)."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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