



Statement on the Dismantling of Essential Federal Health Surveys and Data Collection

We, the undersigned organizations, express serious concerns regarding the recent elimination and reduction of many essential surveys across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. One example of this is the elimination of the Office of Population Surveys in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the dismantling of the team responsible for the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

The NSDUH serves as an irreplaceable resource, providing the foundation for evidence-based policy, public health interventions, and scientific research nationwide. As the leading source of population-based statistical data specifically focused on alcohol, tobacco, drug use, mental health, and other behavioral health information, its data directly informs billions in healthcare spending, treatment program development, and prevention efforts. The dissolution of the expert team overseeing this work creates immediate and severe gaps in our public health data infrastructure.

The timing of this decision is particularly troubling as critical reports on illegally manufactured fentanyl, mental health treatment access, and the 2024 NSDUH data release were in development. The loss of this expertise and institutional knowledge cannot be quickly replaced and threatens the continuity of vital public health surveillance.

We are committed to upholding the highest standards of scientific integrity, which include transparency in research, responsible accessibility, and open engagement with data users. The elimination of the NSDUH team, and so many other federal data sets and surveys, without a clear transition plan or public notification undermines these principles. It erodes public trust in official statistics at a critical time when our nation faces ongoing challenges with quality care accessibility, substance use disorders, and mental health crises.

We urge policymakers, federal agencies, and the administration to reconsider this decision immediately and prioritize the restoration of these federal research teams and their critical work. Establishing a transparent and structured approach to any necessary review or reorganization is essential to maintaining public trust, advancing scientific research, and ensuring that America's public health infrastructure remains robust and responsive to emerging challenges.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact Tristanne Staudt (tstaudt@aapor.org) at the American Association for Public Opinion Research if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Psychological Association
American Sociological Association
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Association of Population Centers
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Data Rescue Project
Population Association of America
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