

## White House Establishes Public Health Commission

In a recent [executive order](#), President Donald Trump established the President's Make America Healthy Again Commission to study chronic diseases and address the country's growing public health crisis. The commission comprises around 14 officials from various federal agencies and is chaired by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. According to the White House, the purpose of this commission is to address life expectancy and chronic disease.

The executive order highlights the following health statistics:

- Americans' average life expectancy (pre-COVID-19) was 78.8 years versus 82.6 years in other countries.
- Six in 10 adults have one chronic disease, while 4 in 10 have two or more chronic conditions.
- One in 5 adults live with a mental illness.
- Thirty million children have at least one chronic condition like asthma and allergies.
- Autism affects one in 36 children.

The White House notes that these outcomes are despite the United States allocating almost 90% of its \$4.5 trillion annual health care spending to manage chronic and mental health conditions.

The executive order directs the national focus in the public and private sectors toward understanding and drastically lowering chronic disease rates and ending childhood chronic disease.

Furthermore, the commission is directed to guide public policy to:

- Prioritize transparency and open-source data in all federally funded health studies.
- Focus federally funded research to investigate why Americans are getting sick.
- Collaborate with farmers to ensure U.S. food is affordable, abundant and healthy.
- Expand treatment options and provide flexible health coverage for beneficial lifestyle changes and disease prevention.

### What's Next?

The commission will initially research the root causes of childhood chronic diseases, including diabetes, obesity and mental health disorders. It will also review the American diet, lifestyle, food production techniques and other contributing factors to chronic illnesses. The executive order directs the commission to deliver a report providing government-wide recommendations for improving American children's health within 100 days of the order.

At this time, this commission is more of a general indicator of the goals of the Trump administration; it's unlikely to have an immediate impact on public health policy. However, the commission's directives could lead to changes in public health.

Employers should continue to monitor for updates. Contact us for more resources.