



Association of Health Care Journalists
Center for Excellence in Health Care Journalism

Better coverage. Better health.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Felice Freyer, President
Independent journalist
Rhode Island

Gideon Gil, Vice President
Stat / Boston Globe Media
Boston, Mass.

Laura Beil, Treasurer
Independent journalist
Texas

Christine Herman, Secretary
Independent journalist
Urbana, Ill.

Joyce Frieden, At-Large Member
MedPage Today
Washington, D.C.

Randy Dotinga
Independent journalist
San Diego, Calif.

Dawn Fallik
Associate professor
University of Delaware

Carrie Feibel
NPR
Washington, D.C.

Michele Cohen Marill
Independent journalist
Atlanta

Renuka Rayasam
KFF Health News
Washington, D.C..

Jonathan Rockoff
The Wall Street Journal
New York, N.Y.

Tammy Worth
Independent journalist
Kansas City, Mo.

Kelsey Ryan
Executive Director

Andrea Waner
Interim Executive Director

January 31, 2025

To Acting Secretary Fink and Acting Director Monarez:

We are writing on behalf of the 1,400 members of the Association of Health Care Journalists, to protest the removal of vital public health data from the CDC website, including survey results from the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System, the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index, and AtlasPlus, an interactive CDC tool with years of data on social determinants of health and diseases including HIV, TB, and STDs.

These data are used by journalists every day to report stories about public health.

At a time when the rise in chronic illnesses and harmful behaviors among young people is at the top of the national agenda, the YRBS data on smoking, vaping, drinking, eating, exercise, and sexual behavior are crucial for reporters trying to inform the public about these issues. The county-level Social Vulnerability Index data is important to inform reporting on communities' resilience and ability to respond when faced with disasters such as wildfires and severe weather.

Even the temporary removal of such data will impair our members' ability to give the public essential and timely health information. We request the immediate restoration of sites that have been taken down in recent days, and that the agency not take down other pages with critical health data.

Sincerely,

Felice J. Freyer, president
Gideon Gil, vice president
Andrea Waner, interim executive director
Association of Health Care Journalists