

# NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

July 31, 2018

Robert Redfield, MD  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Redfield,

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), I write to share with you the need for federal opioid prevention resources to reach local communities, specifically, through the nation's local health departments. As I know you are aware, these local health departments are key partners in protecting the health and well-being of their communities and are instrumental in slowing and stopping the opioid epidemic, through building community coalitions, providing surveillance data to community partners and conducting public outreach campaigns. In short, they are "first responders" in reversing overdose by providing emergency responders with life-saving naloxone. As such, NACCHO calls on CDC to ensure that new funding awards to combat opioid misuse are distributed to eligible directly funded cities and other local health departments that serve our nation's communities.

NACCHO appreciates our continued partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the public health response to the opioid epidemic and now we need to work together to insure dollars reach local communities. While the recent notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) (CDC-RFA-TP18-1802) *2018 Opioid Overdose Crisis Cooperative Agreement Supplemental Guidance* should have included eligibility for directly funded cities, they remain unfunded for reasons still unclear to us. Further, the NOFO lacks important *directive* language to states encouraging them to fund local health departments who are, again, on the front lines of the epidemic. Unless federal dollars appropriated to CDC to combat the opioid epidemic are disseminated locally, the comprehensive federal response to opioid misuse and overdose will be lacking.

Moving forward, NACCHO stands ready to work with CDC to develop a new multi-year opioid cooperative agreement for local health departments. We urge you to recognize the need for federal resources to reach local health departments in order to bolster their response for both opioid overdose and true, upstream prevention efforts.

In addition to concerns about opioid overdose, as you well know, there are additional risks for poor health outcomes and blood-borne infections, including HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV), and hepatitis B virus (HBV) among injection drug users. Substantial progress has been made in reducing HIV infections among injection drug users but increases in injection drug use stemming from the opioid epidemic present a new set of challenges, particularly in rural and suburban communities. Without dedicated resources, these areas lack the public health and healthcare infrastructure and services to comprehensively address the epidemic, leaving communities vulnerable to infectious disease outbreaks. Federal dollars can be best spent allocated to local communities that are dealing with this epidemic every day.



NACCHO looks forward to continuing to work with CDC to address the life-threatening impact of the opioid epidemic. Please contact Eli Briggs, NACCHO Senior Director of Government Affairs, at [ebriggs@naccho.org](mailto:ebriggs@naccho.org) should you have any questions or wish to discuss further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori Tremmel Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lori Tremmel Freeman, MBA  
Chief Executive Officer