

# Snapshot: How HHS is Building a Healthier America

**IN 2022**, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) worked to deliver on the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to build a healthier America. Key areas of focus included tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing health care costs, expanding access to care, strengthening behavioral health care, and reducing health disparities. In 2023, HHS will continue to play a major role in the Administration's efforts to expand access to affordable health care to millions more people by implementing the Inflation Reduction Act. Our commitment to advancing health equity and to ensuring that no one gets left behind is central to all our work. The following is a snapshot of key HHS accomplishments from the past year that support the health and well-being of everyone living in America:

## Key Areas

- ✔ Tackling the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ✔ Reducing Health Care Costs and Expanding Access to Coverage and Care
- ✔ Strengthening Mental and Behavioral Health Care
- ✔ Improving Nutrition and Encouraging Healthy Choices
- ✔ Tackling Climate Change as a Public Health Issue
- ✔ Investing in the Public Health Workforce and Supporting Care Givers
- ✔ Strengthening Supports for Vulnerable Children and Families
- ✔ Investing in Health Innovation
- ✔ Strengthening Public Health Preparedness and Response
- ✔ Advancing Equity and Increasing Opportunity for Communities

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### Tackling the COVID-19 Pandemic

#### *Guidance*

- ✔ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [updated and streamlined existing COVID-19 community guidance](#) to help people better understand their risk, how to protect themselves and others, what actions to take if exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19, and what actions to take if they have symptoms or test positive for the virus.



- ✓ The HHS Office for Civil Rights (OCR) [issued guidance](#) to health care providers to ensure that even when resources are scarce, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals with disabilities must continue to receive health care benefits and services. Preventing anyone from accessing these services is a violation of federal civil rights laws.
- ✓ The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) [released a series of self-paced video](#) modules for frontline nursing home staff designed to minimize infection risk during COVID-19.

### ***Distribution***

- ✓ Since it began, the [HHS Coordination Operations and Response Element](#) (H-CORE) has overseen the rollout and distribution of 2 oral antivirals, 2 monoclonal antibodies, 8 new vaccine products, 5 additional vaccine indications, and the test-to-treat program—delivering 294 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to more than 75,000 sites across the country.
- ✓ H-CORE and other experts in the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) also collaborated with the U.S. Postal Service and the Testing and Diagnostics Working Group to distribute more than 670 million at-home COVID-19 test kits, including nearly 3.2 million tests that are more accessible for people who are blind or have low vision.
- ✓ Health centers supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) administered 22 million doses of vaccine, distributed more than 40 million COVID tests, and rapidly hired and deployed over 14,000 community outreach workers to increase vaccine confidence and improve equity in vaccine uptake in underserved communities.
- ✓ The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) executed the largest deployment of personal protective equipment, distributing more than 270 million N95 respirators to pharmacies and clinics.
- ✓ ASPR leveraged the authorities delegated to the Secretary under the Defense Production Act to support the development, production, and procurement of critical COVID-19 countermeasures. ASPR also strengthened the industrial base and infused the supply chain and marketplace with products the U.S. needs to contain further pandemic waves.

### ***Vaccines***

- ✓ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [took action to provide Americans down to 6 months of age](#) with an updated (bivalent) COVID-19 vaccine and authorized pharmacists to prescribe the oral antiviral treatment to improve access.
- ✓ The National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded and carried out research that determined a [mix-and-match approach to COVID-19 vaccine boosters was safe and effective](#) and supported the [development of Novavax's primary series vaccine](#).
- ✓ NIH launched trials to understand if different vaccine regimens can broaden immune responses in adults; to [study vaccine response in transplant recipients](#); and to [study allergic reactions to mRNA vaccines](#).



- ✔ The HHS [‘We Can Do This’](#) COVID-19 Vaccine Public Education Campaign worked with national and local organizations, state and local health departments, K-12 school districts and higher education institutions, and pharmacies to host pop-up vaccination clinics in urban and rural communities across the country. Since the beginning of the Biden-Harris Administration, the campaign has:
  - Organized more than 100 pop-up vaccination clinics in nearly 50 cities.
  - Produced more than 60 ads for targeted markets to increase vaccine confidence and uptake, and more than 30 ads raising awareness of COVID-19 treatment options.
  - Partnered with over 1,000 organizations, the majority of which work with minority or rural communities. These partnerships have reached over 26 million people and resulted in hundreds of events, and tens of thousands of vaccinations.
  - Launched the COVID-19 Community Corps — a network of nearly 20,000 community leaders and volunteers who serve as trusted voices.
  - Helped close a 10-point disparity gap in our nation’s vaccination rate last year between White and Black/Latino communities.
- ✔ As part of the Administration’s end of year efforts to encourage more Americans to get their updated vaccine in preparation for winter and holiday gatherings, with a special focus on older adults, HHS coordinated outreach in communities with trusted community partners and messengers to provide easy access to updated COVID-19 vaccines and information on the benefits of vaccination.
- ✔ The Administration for Community Living (ACL) funded grants totaling \$125 million to [help older adults and people with disabilities get the updated vaccine](#). With this funding, senior centers, centers for independent living and other organizations that serve disabled people and older adults host vaccination clinics, providing accessible transportation to vaccination sites, connecting people to in-home options, and more.
- ✔ CDC created the [Prevention Research Centers Vaccine Confidence Network](#), focused on increasing vaccine confidence and uptake, especially in communities experiencing health disparities.

### ***Research and Development***

- ✔ The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) coordinated 14 federal departments and agencies to begin a whole-of-government response to Long COVID, including publishing [three reports on Long COVID](#).
- ✔ OASH and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) supported the [PandemicX Accelerator](#), a 6-month pilot project that brought together 15 digital health startups to build and scale COVID-19 technologies with businesses fueled by HHS data and healthcare innovation.
- ✔ ACL’s National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) funded several projects focused increasing support for people with long COVID, such as one of the first published studies focused on [return-to-work needs](#).



- ✓ In September, ACL's NIDILRR [awarded a grant](#) to develop an intervention to enable return-to-work by employees who experience brain fog and other cognitive impairments due to long COVID.
- ✓ AHRQ continued to [produce](#) new data, research, and evidence-based tools to respond to the pandemic.

### Reducing Health Care Costs and Expanding Access to Coverage and Care

#### *HealthCare.gov and Marketplace Coverage*

- ✓ A [record-breaking 14.5 million people signed up for health care coverage](#) during the historic 2022 Marketplace Open Enrollment period, marking an all-time high enrollment at all-time low prices.
- ✓ [HHS released a new report showing significant gains in health insurance coverage](#) during the 2021 and 2022 HealthCare.gov Open Enrollment periods among populations with historically higher uninsured rates. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, there has been a 49 percent increase among Black enrollees, a 53 percent increase among Latino enrollees, and a 32 percent increase among American Indian and Alaska Native enrollees from 2020 to 2022.
- ✓ The Biden-Harris Administration [finalized a rule which will help about 1 million Americans who are offered employer insurance](#) either gain coverage or see their coverage become more affordable through the Marketplace.
- ✓ [HHS released a new report showing that the national uninsured rate reached an all-time low of 8 percent in early 2022](#), with 5.2 million people having gained coverage since 2020, coinciding with the beginning of the Biden-Harris Administration in January 2021.

#### *Expanding access to health insurance and lowering health care costs for America's families*

- ✓ The Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law and included a series of historic health-related provisions that HHS is working to implement. These include:
  - Helping 13 million people covered under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) save an average of \$800 per year on their Marketplace health plans through continued premium subsidies.
  - Capping copays for insulin prescriptions for Medicare beneficiaries at \$35 for a month's supply in Part D and Part B starting in 2023.
  - Offering recommended adult vaccines at no additional charge for people with Medicare prescription drug coverage starting in 2023.
  - Requiring rebates from drug manufacturers who raise their prescription drug prices on Medicare Part B or Part D drugs faster than the rate of inflation.



- Allowing Medicare to negotiate better prices on certain drugs.
- Offering improved financial protections for out-of-pocket drug costs by capping annual out-of-pocket drug costs at \$2,000 for 2025 and eliminating catastrophic cost sharing for prescription drugs for Americans with Medicare Part D starting in 2024.
- ✔ The No Surprises Act went into effect on January 1, 2022, ensuring protections from surprise bills for most Americans with private insurance. HHS and the Departments of Labor and Treasury [published extensive guidance](#) throughout the year for plans and issuers, providers, and consumers aimed at ensuring compliance with the No Surprises Act.
- ✔ HHS initiated Qualified Payment Amount (QPA) audits of issuers offering individual and/or group health insurance coverage in states where HHS and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has jurisdiction over QPA provisions.
- ✔ AHRQ convened a Health Equity Summit to identify strategies needed to advance equity within healthcare delivery.
- ✔ AHRQ released a grant supplement NOFO to increase the diversity of the health services researchers, including groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in health services research and who are or become disabled.
- ✔ Leaders from AHRQ and the National Institute of Drug Abuse published a commentary in the New England Journal of Medicine that discusses how applying an equity lens to addressing the worsening epidemic of substance use disorders is critical to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities.
- ✔ AHRQ published the Congressionally mandated [2022 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Report](#), which indicates that despite significant improvements in the quality of care for minority and underserved communities, disparities persist.
- ✔ FDA issued a final rule to improve access to hearing aids that may lower costs for millions of Americans with perceived mild to moderate hearing loss.

### ***Improving treatments and care***

- ✔ FDA introduced an innovative proposal to broaden the types of drugs that can be approved as nonprescription—increasing availability of drugs that would otherwise only be available by prescription.
- ✔ CDC released updated and expanded recommendations for clinicians providing pain care for adult outpatients with short- and long-term pain.
- ✔ HRSA's administration of the community health center program allowed more than 30 million people in underserved communities across the country to receive primary health care services—including blood pressure testing, diabetes and asthma control, cancer screening, and wellness checks— regardless of their ability to pay.
- ✔ HRSA's maternal and child health programs helped almost 3.7 million infants— nearly every newborn in the country— receive newborn screening for genetic and metabolic conditions like cystic fibrosis, thyroid diseases, sickle cell, and immunodeficiency conditions.



### ***Ensuring access to reproductive health care***

- ✔ OASH supported reproductive rights by launching [reproductiverights.gov](https://reproductiverights.gov), starting a campaign to help connect women to resources they need, and strengthening our work in Title X.
- ✔ OASH bolstered Title X to help expand and restore access to equitable and affordable family planning services nationwide, including expanding telehealth care in Title X clinics, increasing provider training, and awarding \$280 million to Title X clinics.
- ✔ HHS launched the Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access, an intra-departmental group that coordinates the work of HHS and advises the Secretary on protecting and bolstering sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice domestically and abroad.
- ✔ HHS issued guidance and a letter from Secretary Becerra to reaffirm that the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) protects providers when offering abortion services as stabilizing care for emergency medical conditions.
- ✔ The Office of Population Affairs (OPA) led a public awareness campaign to increase awareness among women of reproductive age where to access reproductive health services and rights associated with accessing these services.
- ✔ Following the Dobbs decision, OCR issued guidance to help protect patients seeking reproductive health care, as well as their providers, and to address how federal law and regulations protect individuals' private medical information.
- ✔ HHS, along with the U.S. Departments of the Treasury and Labor, issued guidance to clarify protections for birth control coverage under the ACA. Under the ACA, most private health plans are required to provide birth control and family planning counseling at no additional cost.
- ✔ OCR issued guidance on gender-affirming care clarifying that the HIPAA Privacy Rule prohibits disclosure of gender affirming care which is protected health information, without signed authorization, except in limited circumstances. The guidance also clarified that denials of health care based on gender identity are illegal, as is restricting doctors and health care providers from providing care because of a patient's gender identity.
- ✔ HHS issued a proposed rule that would strengthen the regulations interpreting the nondiscrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and would reinforce that discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions.
- ✔ HHS issued guidance to roughly 60,000 U.S. retail pharmacies, clarifying their obligations under federal civil rights laws.
- ✔ HHS released a report for the President on HHS actions to ensure access to reproductive health care following the Supreme Court's ruling, with further details on future actions and commitments.





- ✔ The HHS Office on Women’s Health (OWH) and CMS announced the winners of the HHS Racial Equity in Postpartum Care Challenge, a program to address maternal health disparities and improve postpartum care for Black and American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN) low-income beneficiaries enrolled in Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

### ***Strengthening Medicaid***

Throughout the year HHS worked to strengthen Medicaid by:

- ✔ Issuing guidance to strengthen access to high-quality, comprehensive health care for children.
- ✔ Making the largest ever investment in the Connecting Kids to Coverage program—awarding \$49 million to organizations on the frontlines of reducing uninsured rates and connecting more children, parents, and families to health care coverage.
- ✔ Approving states to extend Medicaid and CHIP postpartum coverage to a full year after pregnancy so families can access health care during the critical postpartum period.
- ✔ Expanding Medicaid’s Money Follows the Person demonstration program, which supports older adults and people with disabilities safely transition from institutional care to their homes and communities.

### ***Improving nursing home care***

HHS took numerous steps to improve nursing home care, including:

- ✔ Strengthening oversight of the nation’s poorest performing nursing homes.
- ✔ Making more Medicare nursing home ownership data publicly available.
- ✔ Protecting nursing home residents and their caregivers from illegal debt collection practices.
- ✔ Understanding minimum staffing requirements for nursing homes.
- ✔ Launching an enhanced Nursing Home Five-Star Quality Rating System.
- ✔ Publishing new data and report on hospital and nursing home ownership.
- ✔ Improving the safety and quality of care of the nation’s nursing homes.

### **Strengthening Mental and Behavioral Health Care**

- ✔ FDA took steps to combat the opioid overdose crisis by announcing a preliminary assessment that [certain naloxone products have the potential to be safe and effective for over-the-counter use.](#)
- ✔ The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and HRSA awarded more than \$1.6 billion in [investments for communities throughout the country addressing the addiction and overdose crises.](#)



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- ✓ On International Overdose Awareness Day, SAMHSA announced [\\$79.1 million in overdose prevention grants](#), to address the opioid and overdose epidemic.
- ✓ The Indian Health Service (IHS) invested [\\$43.4 million in tribal communities](#) to support behavioral and mental health programs that address several issues, including substance abuse, suicide, and domestic violence prevention.
- ✓ IHS opened the Sacred Oaks Healing Center, a [Youth Regional Treatment Center](#) in Davis, California, to provide culturally appropriate substance use and behavioral health treatment to American Indian and Alaska Native youth ages 12 to 17.
- ✓ OASH bolstered support and training for substance use, including announcing a [standard clinical definition for opioid withdrawal in infants](#).
- ✓ OASH invested \$3.6 million to bolster support and training on substance use during pregnancy and the postpartum period.
- ✓ ONC and CDC [developed an interactive tool](#) to help states better integrate their Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs with clinicians' health IT systems.
- ✓ ONC [released a new resource](#) to support pediatric care and practice settings to improve care for infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome.
- ✓ NIH's National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) [launched a research network to test harm reduction strategies](#) in different community settings to inform efforts to help save lives.
- ✓ SAMHSA [transitioned the 10-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to 988](#)—an easy-to-remember three-digit number for 24/7 crisis care.
- ✓ Secretary Becerra kicked off a [National Tour to Strengthen Mental Health](#) and heard directly from Americans across the country about the behavioral health challenges they face. He also engaged with local elected officials and leaders to strengthen the mental health and crisis care system in our communities.
- ✓ U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released a [Framework on Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being](#) that shows how workplaces can be engines of well-being.
- ✓ U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released a limited series of free mindfulness tools in collaboration with Calm to help ease end-of-year anxiety.
- ✓ SAMHSA awarded \$45.1 million in grants to [meet the behavioral health needs of people who either are at risk for contracting, or are living with HIV/AIDS](#).
- ✓ SAMHSA [awarded \\$800 million](#) in Bipartisan Safer Communities Act funds to address the nation's ongoing behavioral health crisis.
- ✓ SAMHSA [announced more than \\$100 million](#) in funding from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act to states and territories for mental health emergency preparedness, crisis response, and the expansion of 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline services.
- ✓ ACL launched a national center to improve support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and mental health disabilities, so they can live and participate in their communities.





- ✓ AHRQ published an interactive data visualization of [opioid use among elderly and non-elderly adults](#) during 2015-16 and 2018-2019 based on data from MEPS.
- ✓ In support of primary care practices, AHRQ released a [new guide](#) that provides research evidence, guidance and resources for treating stimulant use in primary care practices.
- ✓ AHRQ also released new evidence for treating chronic and acute pain, including updated systematic reviews on treatments for acute pain, noninvasive nonpharmacological treatment for chronic pain, and cannabis and other plant-based treatments for chronic pain.
- ✓ CDC offered ways to cope with stress through a culturally responsive communication campaign, How Right Now, developed to promote and strengthen emotional well-being and resiliency among U.S. groups disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and social determinants of health.

### Improving Nutrition and Encouraging Healthy Choices

- ✓ FDA proposed [updated criteria for when foods can be labeled with the nutrient content claim “healthy”](#) on their packaging. This proposed rule would align the definition of the “healthy” claim with current nutrition science, the updated Nutrition Facts label and the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- ✓ HHS worked around-the-clock along with federal partners and industry stakeholders to [ensure the availability of safe and nutritious infant formula](#) during a supply shortage.
  - FDA took steps to help the U.S. continue diversifying its infant formula market and make families less susceptible to shocks in the infant formula market.
  - CDC provided estimates of the percentage of children consuming infant formula and provided parents and caregivers with [current information](#) for safely feeding babies if infant formula is unavailable.
  - ASPR managed the global operations and logistics to bring in more than 6.2 million powder pounds of baby formula. This involved 33 aircraft missions, operations support for dozens of ground transport efforts, and the management and execution of donation agreements with commercial airlines to ensure parents had access to vital nutrition for their infants.
- ✓ FDA proposed rules [prohibiting menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars](#) to prevent youth initiation and significantly reduce tobacco-related disease and death, and announced plans for a proposed rule to reduce addictiveness of cigarettes and other combusted tobacco products.
- ✓ OASH led the Department’s effort to support the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health and [contributed to a National Strategy](#) outlining actions to help end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases and disparities by 2030. CDC, in collaboration with OASH, supported the planning, execution, and follow up on the White House Conference.



## Tackling Climate Change as a Public Health Issue

- ✓ In collaboration with the White House, the OASH Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) launched the White House/HHS [Health Sector Climate Pledge](#). Over 100 organizations have signed the Pledge, demonstrating their commitment to lowering greenhouse gas emissions and building more climate resilient infrastructure. More than 1,080 federal and private sector hospitals made these commitments, together representing over 15% of U.S. hospitals.
- ✓ OCCHE launched the [Climate and Health Outlook](#), the nation's first seasonal forecast product for health, and published six editions in 2022 tackling hazards including extreme heat, drought, wildfire, hurricanes, and Lyme disease.
- ✓ OASH established the [Office of Environmental Justice](#) (OEJ) and partnered with CDC to create the [Environmental Justice Index](#) — the first national, geographic-driven tool designed to measure the cumulative impacts of environmental burden through the lenses of human health and health equity.
- ✓ AHRQ released the primer “[Reducing Healthcare Carbon Emissions: A Primer on Measures and Actions to Mitigate Climate Change](#)” to help healthcare organizations reduce their carbon footprint and protect communities from climate threats.
- ✓ Using data from the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP), AHRQ published “[Emergency Department \(ED\) Visits for Diagnoses Directly Indicating Heat Exposure: Variation Across Counties in the United States, 2016–2020](#)” that uses maps to show state variation in ED utilization for heat exposure diagnoses. The analysis also showed that rural counties were more likely to have higher rates of ED visits related to heat exposure than large metropolitan counties.
- ✓ NIH launched the [Climate Change and Health Initiative](#), an urgent effort to reduce health threats from climate change across the lifespan and build health resilience in individuals, communities, and nations around the world, especially among those at highest risk.

## Investing in the Public Health Workforce and Supporting Caregivers

- ✓ ACL awarded \$150 million to [expand the public health workforce](#) within the aging and disability networks.
- ✓ ACL released the [2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers](#). It highlights nearly 350 actions the federal government will take to support family caregivers in the coming year and more than 150 actions that can be adopted at other levels of government and across the private sector to build a system to support family caregivers.



- ✓ ACL [established a national center](#) to help states improve recruitment, retention, training, and professional development of the paid direct care work force who provide the critical services that make it possible for people with disabilities and older adults to live in their own homes and communities.
- ✓ The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and agencies in the Child Care and Development Fund lead agencies directed over \$2 billion to increase wages and benefits for child care staff, increased provider payment rates in more than half of states, built the supply of child care, and expanded child care assistance to more families.
- ✓ More than 20,000 clinicians— the largest number ever— received scholarships and loan repayment in return for practicing in underserved communities through HRSA's National Health Service Corps.
- ✓ HRSA programs provide support and training to help more than 34,000 individuals from racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds underrepresented in the health care workforce become health professionals and improve equity in health care delivery.
- ✓ CDC provided key support to develop, sustain, and diversify the public health workforce throughout the COVID-19 response through CDC's training and fellowship programs, including [launching and awarding the first Public Health AmeriCorps grants](#) in partnership with AmeriCorps to recruit the first group of nearly 3,000 members.
- ✓ CDC awarded more than \$3 billion to help state, local, and territorial jurisdictions across the United States [strengthen the nation's public health workforce and infrastructure](#).
- ✓ Through the American Rescue Plan, IHS received \$210 million to support public health workforce activities to bolster the capacity of tribal communities to respond to COVID-19 and future emergencies.
- ✓ U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released a Surgeon General's [advisory on health worker burnout](#) aimed at building a thriving health workforce.

### Strengthening Supports for Vulnerable Communities

#### *Preventing human trafficking*

- ✓ HHS formed the Task Force to Prevent Human Trafficking to strengthen HHS' human trafficking prevention and intervention efforts with a focus on partnerships, equity and open data.

#### *Supporting refugees*

- ✓ ACF cared for more than 128,000 unaccompanied children in FY22— exceeding the unprecedented 122,000 in FY21— without any capacity shortages or an emergency backup of children at the US border.
- ✓ ACF directly supported nearly 400,000 people from other countries in creating new lives for themselves in the United States, including welcoming more than 80,000 Afghan humanitarian parolees in 2021 and 2022, nearly 250,000 Cuban and Haitian entrants to the United States, and more than 83,000 Ukrainians through the United for Ukraine program.



### ***Investing in tribal health and wellbeing***

- ✔ Passage of the [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#) gave the agency advance appropriations for the first time in its history. Advance appropriations are necessary to ensure continued access to critical health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Predictable funding will allow the agency to disburse funds more quickly and enable IHS, tribal and urban Indian health programs to manage budgets effectively and efficiently, coordinate care and improve health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- ✔ IHS invested a total of \$9 billion dollars to support IHS, tribal, and urban Indian health programs to expand vaccinations, testing, public health surveillance and health care services throughout the pandemic.
- ✔ IHS [further expanded telehealth services to meet patient needs](#) by awarding a clinical video telehealth contract that will make services available across multiple devices and allows for expanded televideo visits in settings such as homes or schools with low broadband availability.
- ✔ IHS [allocated \\$700 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) to improve tribal water and sanitation systems providing 71,000 American Indian and Alaska Native homes with critical services like water wells and onsite wastewater disposal systems and connections to community water supply and wastewater disposal systems.
- ✔ CDC supported more than 140 tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations with more than \$24 million through [Healthy Tribes](#) to promote health, prevent chronic diseases, reduce health disparities, and strengthen connections to culture and community practices for improved health and wellness among American Indian and Alaska Native people.
- ✔ IHS opened new facilities across Indian Country, including the Little Shell Tribal Health Clinic in Great Falls, Montana and the White Buffalo Health Center, and re-opened the Verne E. Gibbs Health Center in the Fort Peck Service Unit.

### **Investing in health innovation**

- ✔ President Biden [established the Advanced Research Project Agency for Health \(ARPA-H\)](#) as an independent entity within the National Institutes of Health to support the development of high-impact research to drive biomedical and health breakthroughs that can deliver transformative, sustainable, and equitable health solutions. In September, the President named Dr. Renee Wegrzyn as the agency's inaugural director.
- ✔ OASH launched a prize competition with a purse of \$10.5 million to spur [development of an artificial kidney prototype](#) that would be ready for human clinical trials by 2024.
- ✔ OASH announced [10 winners of the first phase of the LymeX Diagnostics Prize competition](#). Each winning team received a prize of \$100,000 for a total of \$1,000,000 awarded for innovative advancements in Lyme disease diagnostics.



- ✓ **ONC released the final technical criteria for the health care industry to implement a [common format for patient addresses in health care records](#) designed to lead to more efficient patient record matching across providers.**
- ✓ **ONC launched the [Trusted Exchange Framework](#) and [Common Agreement](#) (TEFCA) to establish a set of non-binding principles to improve data-sharing among health information networks and simplify the exchange of electronic health information for patients and providers nationwide.**
- ✓ **CDC awarded \$479,989 in supplemental funding to develop a research platform to improve access to disability data to better characterize and evaluate the health and wellness of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.**
- ✓ **ONC added data classes, including disability status, functional status, and mental and cognitive status assessments, to the U.S. Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI) Draft Version 3, a document that aims to advance public health reporting and health equity.**
- ✓ **NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) [carried out a clinical trial](#) that found a 'bionic pancreas,' which uses next-generation technology to automatically deliver insulin, was more effective at maintaining blood glucose levels within normal range than standard-of-care management among people with type 1 diabetes.**
- ✓ **NIH's National Cancer Institute awarded \$23 million to establish centers of excellence to study telehealth for cancer care.**

### Strengthening public health preparedness and response

- ✓ **HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra [elevated ASPR from a staff division to an operating division](#), taking on the new name of the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response. This change will allow ASPR to mobilize a coordinated national response more effectively and efficiently during future disasters and emergencies in close collaboration with its sister agencies.**
- ✓ **Nearly [950 U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps](#) officers and more than 200 National Disaster Medical System personnel provided support to states, territories, and tribal regions for COVID clinical care, testing, vaccines, and treatments. USPHS officers also supported Operation Allies Welcome that resettled more than 80,000 Afghans to the United States; Ebola entry screening at five U.S. airports for all passengers traveling from Uganda; clinical care and case management of unaccompanied children crossing the southern borders; and clinical recovery and case management support in the aftermath of several hurricanes and a tornado.**
- ✓ **NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) [awarded \\$577 million](#) to [establish nine specialized centers to develop oral antivirals](#) targeting specific viral families with high potential to cause a pandemic in the future.**
- ✓ **NIAID [awarded more than \\$12 million to three institutions for the development of antiviral therapies](#) to treat diseases caused by viruses with pandemic potential.**



- ✔ HHS [quickly responded to an outbreak of mpox](#) mainly among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, after global importations. CDC worked with private labs to make up to 80,000 tests per week available by July, worked with FDA to make tecovirimat (TPOXX) treatment more easily and quickly accessible to healthcare providers, and developed a vaccination strategy to get vaccine to those at highest risk. ASPR's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) distributed over 893,000 vials of JYNNEOS vaccine, 80,000 bottles of oral TPOXX, and 12,000 vials of intravenous TPOXX across the U.S. ASPR's Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) collaborated with industry partners to ramp up JYNNEOS manufacturing including manufacturing in the U.S. FDA [assisted with response to the mpox public health emergency](#) by taking steps to increase mpox testing capacity and accessibility nationwide, and authorizing emergency use of JYNNEOS vaccine to increase vaccine supply.
- ✔ CDC [worked closely with local, national, and international partners to contain the Ebola outbreak in Uganda](#), as well as to keep the United States protected. CDC and the Department of Homeland Security initiated entry screening for U.S.-bound travelers from Uganda; deployed staff to assist with local response; provided monoclonal antibodies; helped build local response capacity; and increased virus surveillance and case management systems.
- ✔ ASPR's BARDA also supported the Sabin Vaccine Institute on an NIH-developed investigational Sudan Ebola virus vaccine, Mapp Biopharmaceutical on an Ebola therapeutic, and OraSure Technologies on Ebola diagnostic tests, to help protect people at home and abroad in response to the Uganda Ebola outbreak.
- ✔ ASPR successfully executed one of the largest deployments of personnel and equipment in support of a hurricane in the last five years. ASPR deployed 10 National Disaster Medical System teams, with hundreds of additional incident management, logistical, and regional staff, supporting seven free-standing emergency room sites across Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian.
- ✔ CDC awarded the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) \$1.22 million in American Rescue Plan funding to implement a program to better serve the needs of people with disabilities during health emergencies, including COVID-19 planning, mitigation, and recovery efforts.
- ✔ CDC awarded the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists \$250,000 in supplemental funding to develop a standardized reporting template that states can use for capturing and reporting data related to the impacts of public health emergencies on persons with disabilities.

### Advancing Equity and Increasing Opportunity for Communities

HHS remains committed to addressing inequities and advancing equity across policies, programs, and processes across the Department. During 2022, HHS:

- ✔ Published the [HHS Equity Action Plan](#) to institutionalize and sustain a focus on equity, and to expand opportunity and improve access to HHS programs over time.





- ✔ Launched the Secretary's Challenge on Equity to solicit innovative policy ideas to advance equity in our programs, policies, and processes using existing authorities.
- ✔ Provided practical guidance to staff to ensure that all populations have opportunity with HHS programs and policies. This included integrating equity assessments and disparities impact statements into HHS work consistent with Executive Order 13985.
- ✔ Relunched the HHS Language Access Steering Committee to create an enduring structure to facilitate sharing of effective practices and procedures for language access.
- ✔ Proposed comprehensive updates to the nondiscrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act to clarify duties of covered entities and lower barriers to language access. Importantly, the statutes and regulation apply to more than just ACA-related programs and services.
- ✔ Established the Small Business Customer Experience as a department-wide tool to forecast opportunities for small businesses and reduce barriers to entry for small businesses and increase competition. Use of the tool generated over 6,500 procurement opportunities for FY23, which is double from the previous year.

### ***Investing in social determinants of health***

- ✔ ACF released \$338 million in funding to help states and territories tailor social service programming for their population's needs.
- ✔ ACF provided \$4.5 billion in heating and cooling assistance to states, territories, and tribes. In addition to subsidizing home heating costs and covering unpaid utility bills, the federal program will help families make cost-effective home energy repairs to lower their heating and cooling bills.
- ✔ ACF released \$183.2 million in funding to support community-based services to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities, and help families and individuals with low incomes become fully self-sufficient.
- ✔ ACL, in partnership with CDC, launched a Community Care Hub National Learning Community to improve the capability and capacity of networks of community-based organizations to contract with health care organizations to address health-related social needs and public health needs.
- ✔ ACL announced winners of the Social Care Referrals Challenge, which sought IT solutions to support health care systems and community-based organizations (CBOs) in partnering to provide holistic health and social care for older adults and disabled people.
- ✔ CDC funded 36 communities to develop action plans to address social determinants of health by working across healthcare, housing, transportation, social services, and other community-based organizations. The goal is to prevent and reduce chronic diseases among people experiencing health disparities.



## Snapshot: How HHS is Building a Healthier America

- ✔ CDC [funded training and deployment of community health workers](#) in 68 communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and that also experienced long-standing health disparities. They are working on social determinants of health with over 14,000 referrals to date, for things like transportation, food and nutrition services, housing and shelter services, and access to health care.
- ✔ The Office of Minority Health (OMH) and CDC launched a new Hear Her campaign segment aimed at improving maternal health outcomes among American Indian and Alaska Native women.

