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**Contact: Joe Agovino |** 516-509-3075 | media@societyforadhd.org

**Why the MAHA Report Is a Threat to Science, Health Equity, and Every Family Seeking Answers!**

*By Tanya Murphy, President & CEO, The Society for ADHD and Co-Occurring Conditions*

**Arlington, VA** – Yesterday, the Trump Administration’s “Make America Healthy Again” Commission, chaired by Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr, released its long-awaited (some might say ‘dreaded’) public health report.

Under normal circumstances, one would expect a major health-policy document from HHS to present carefully researched analysis and science-based solutions. After all, public health discourse thrives on complexity, nuance, and the courage to analyze and evolve; and yet, what we received was a government-commissioned document that reads like a manifesto of misinformation, fueled more by ideology than evidence, and more likely to mislead than to heal.

Let me be clear, this is *not* a public health plan. It is a dangerous attempt to undermine decades of scientific research, vilify medical professionals, and stigmatize millions of Americans, especially those living with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

As President and CEO of the Society for ADHD and Co-Occurring Conditions, I am deeply alarmed. Our organization was founded to fight exactly this kind of dangerous stigma and pseudoscience. We advocate for evidence-based treatment, equitable access to care, and respect for the lived experiences of the ADHD community, particularly those from marginalized communities, adults diagnosed later in life, and families navigating systemic barriers to care. This report undermines all of that.

Among its many reckless claims, the MAHA Report suggests that ADHD is the product of bad parenting or poor lifestyle choices. This is not just wrong, it is cruel. ADHD is a complex, hereditary, neurodevelopmental condition supported by decades of peer-reviewed medical research. It affects individuals from birth and continues throughout the lifespan. To insinuate that parents are to blame not only deepens the shame many families already carry, it actively discourages them from seeking help.

For Black and brown families, where institutional distrust and access disparities are already profound, this narrative is even more harmful. These communities have historically been underdiagnosed, misdiagnosed, or ignored entirely by the medical establishment. Now, they are being told that their children don’t have a condition, they simply need more discipline and extra outdoor time.

Let’s be clear: suggesting that screen time, diet, or a walk in the woods can replace comprehensive ADHD treatment isn’t public health advice, it is negligence dressed as “folksy” wisdom. Yes, environmental and lifestyle factors can, and should, play supportive roles in managing symptoms. But for many, ADHD is a

lifelong condition that requires a multimodal treatment plan, including behavioral therapy, school accommodations, coaching, and when appropriate, medication.

And here is where the report takes an especially irresponsible turn by casting ADHD medication as dangerous, ineffective, and overprescribed. It cherry-picks older studies, strips them of context, and frames these treatments as part of a grand pharmaceutical conspiracy. In doing so, it ignores decades of research and lived experience showing that, while no medication is without risk, stimulant medications remain among the most rigorously studied and consistently effective mental health interventions available.

When prescribed and monitored appropriately, ADHD medications are not only safe, they are life-changing. They help people regulate executive function, manage co-occurring anxiety or depression, improve sleep, and achieve success in school, work, and relationships. Like any medical treatment, they require care and oversight. But for many of our members, these medications are not optional luxuries, they are critical tools for survival.

To undermine these treatments based on ideology and pseudoscience is reckless. But to do so in an official HHS report, *without input from clinical experts, researchers, or the very people who live with ADHD every day*, is indefensible.

We were particularly shocked by the report’s silence on adult ADHD. While it briefly acknowledges that more adults are receiving diagnoses, it frames this as evidence of overdiagnosis, a baseless and downright insulting conclusion. The actual facts demonstrate that millions of adults are only now discovering that the struggles they have faced their entire lives has a name, a cause, *and* a treatment. Receiving a diagnosis in adulthood is often a moment of profound clarity as well as an act of empowerment, not pathology.

The ADHD community deserves better. We deserve science. We deserve respect. And we deserve policy grounded in reality, not fear-mongering.

We at the Society for ADHD and Co-Occurring Conditions are calling on Congress to do what HHS will not: reject the MAHA Report and initiate a bipartisan, *evidence-based inquiry* into the realities of ADHD and other neurodevelopmental conditions. It is time for lawmakers to convene a task force of medical doctors, clinical researchers, mental health professionals, and lived-experience advocates, in other words, people who understand both the science *and* the stakes. Any future guidance must reflect rigorous research, modern clinical practice, and the real-world experiences of those living with these conditions every day.

In the meantime, we will not be silent. We will continue to stand up for families seeking help, for adults seeking answers, and for children navigating systems that too often misunderstand and mistreat them. We will push back against misinformation. We will defend the truth: ADHD is not a political talking point. It is a real, lifelong condition that deserves compassion, care, and credibility.

To our community… You are not alone. You are not broken. You are not to blame. You deserve support, not stigma.

And to RFK Jr. and the administration officials who allowed this report to be released under the banner of public health, the ADHD community is watching. And we will not let you rewrite our reality.

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