



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## The National Association of County and City Health Officials Supports the Surgeon General's Call to Erase Stigma Associated with Opioid Addiction

Washington, DC, September 21, 2018 —U.S. Surgeon General Jerome M. Adams has released the report [Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Spotlight on Opioids](#), calling for a cultural shift in the way Americans talk about the opioid crisis, and recommending actions that can prevent and treat opioid misuse and promote recovery.

"Addiction is a brain disease that touches families across America – even my own," said Dr. Adams. "We need to work together to put an end to stigma."

The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), representing nearly 3,000 local health departments, wholeheartedly supports Dr. Adam's approach. Local health departments are on the front lines of this national public health crisis, working to protect and support communities across the country.

The Surgeon General is calling on all individuals to do the following:

- Talk about opioid misuse. Have a conversation about preventing drug misuse and overdose.
- Be safe. Only take opioid medications as prescribed, ensure that medication is stored in a secure place, and dispose of unused medication properly.
- Understand pain and talk with your healthcare provider. Treatments other than opioids can be effective in managing pain.

- Understand that addiction is a chronic disease. With the right treatment and supports, people do recover.
- Be prepared. Get and learn how to use naloxone, an opioid overdose-reversing drug.

“Local health departments can play a crucial role in raising awareness and educating their communities about opioid addiction, effectiveness of medication-assisted treatment, access to care and resources for those struggling,” said NACCHO Chief Executive Officer Lori Tremmel Freeman. “They are also important community partners, working across other sectors within the community, including hospital systems, healthcare delivery, mental health and substance abuse, social services, emergency services, and law enforcement, to address this epidemic.”

To learn more about NACCHO’s position on the opioid epidemic, [click here](#).

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#### **About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).