Everyone Has a Role to Play

The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health discusses approaches to effectively address the public health crisis of substance misuse and substance use disorders. “How we respond to this crisis is a test for America,” states Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, the 19th U.S. Surgeon General. “This Report aims to shift the way our society thinks about substance misuse and substance use disorders while promoting evidence-based interventions to prevent and treat these conditions.”

Addressing substance misuse and substance use disorders is a priority for the nation. The Report charges individuals, educators, organizations, policymakers, and communities to work together to prevent substance misuse and support wider access to treatment and recovery services, so that all Americans can fulfill their potential and lead happy, healthy, and productive lives.

This toolkit is designed to assist you, your organization, or your agency in spreading the word about The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health. It provides information about the Report’s findings, recommendations, and resources your organization can use to engage a broad cross section of the American public in this critical effort. It contains:

- An overview of the Report and collateral (supplemental) materials
- Suggested communication channels to employ in your outreach
- Promotional resources and materials

We encourage you to take ideas from this Toolkit and use the content within your networks to spread the message and expand the reach of this historic Report. If you use the examples, please attribute the materials to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. All materials described here can be found on http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
Report Overview

The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health presents alcohol and drug misuse and substance use disorders as public health challenges. Written by leading scientists and researchers, its seven chapters discuss the latest science, describe evidence-based programs, policies, and strategies to address substance misuse, and make recommendations for the future:

- **Introduction and Overview of the Report** describes the extent of the substance use problem in the United States and describes the purpose, focus, and format of the Report.

- **The Neurobiology of Substance Use, Misuse, and Addiction** describes three main circuits in the brain involved in addiction, and how substance use alters the normal function of these circuits. Understanding this transformation in the brain is critical to understanding why addiction is a health condition, not a moral failing or character flaw.

- **Prevention Programs and Policies** describes a range of programs focused on preventing substance misuse, including universal prevention programs that target the whole community as well as programs that are tailored to high-risk populations. It also describes population-level evidence-based policies that are effective for reducing alcohol and drug misuse.

- **Early Intervention, Treatment, and Management of Substance Use Disorders** describes evidence-supported practices to identify people who have a substance use disorder and engage them in treatment. It also describes the range of medications and behavioral treatments that can help people successfully address a substance use disorder.

- **Recovery: The Many Paths to Wellness** describes the growing array of effective services and systems that provide recovery support and the many pathways that make recovery possible.

- **Health Care Systems and Substance Use Disorders** explains why integrating general health care and substance use disorder services can result in better outcomes and describes policies and activities underway to achieve that goal.

The appendices provide additional detail about the topics covered in the Report.

- Appendix A, *Review Process for Prevention Programs*, details the review process for the prevention programs included in the Prevention chapter and the evidence on these programs.
- Appendix B, *Evidence-Based Prevention Programs and Policies*, provides detailed tables on the scientific evidence grounding the programs and policies discussed.
- Appendix C, *Resource Guide*, provides resources specific to those seeking information on preventing and treating substance misuse or substance use disorders.
- Appendix D, *Important Facts about Alcohol and Drugs*, contains facts about alcohol and specific drugs, including descriptions, uses and possible health effects, treatment options, and statistics as of 2015.

In addition to the Report itself, you will find resources that explain the main points and translate its findings and recommendations for specific audiences.

**Fact Sheets for Different Audiences:** Fact sheets that contain findings and recommendations for individuals and families, health professionals, communities, and federal, state, local, and tribal governments, aimed at enlisting different stakeholder groups in addressing substance misuse. A general fact sheet provides information about the Report for any audience.
**Report Highlights: At-A-Glance:** A brief summary of key messages and important facts and statistics in the Report provides a supplemental resource showing the seriousness of the substance misuse problem in our nation, its consequences, and how widespread implementation of evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery support services and integration of substance use disorder services within mainstream health care can help.

**Substance Misuse Terminology:** Approved terms to use in collateral materials and other documents promoting the Report.
Suggested Communication Channels to Promote Engagement

Your organization may have multiple communication vehicles you can use in creating awareness of and interest in the Report.

Website
You can promote the Report in many ways from your webpage. Provided in this Toolkit are some resources you can use to engage your audience, such as the facts from the Report and infographics from the accompanying fact sheets. We have also developed images, a promotional video, and banners in various sizes.

Blogs
We encourage you to blog about the Report. Blogs are a good way to share information with your audience about topics that are important to you and them. This Report, with its potential impact on individuals and communities across our nation, is timely, considering the prevalence of alcohol and drug misuse and the current opioid crisis. We have drafted some language that you can use or adapt to meet your needs.

Personal and Professional Networks
Your own network and those of other individuals in your organization, including those you know personally and professionally, are likely to care about similar issues. By using your network, through email or professional social networking sites, you can help extend the reach of this Report and its resources.

Social Media
Social media posts are another efficient and easy way to spread the message. Tweet or post (using Twitter, Facebook, or other social media channels) about the overall Report or specific chapters most relevant to your audiences. Images and sample social media messages are available to engage audiences on multiple topics.

Newsletter and Listserv
Another way to share this information is to submit articles and content to existing newsletters and listservs that reach relevant audiences. Draft copy for such articles is included and can be customized to best meet your needs.

Conferences and Meetings
Present information at conferences and meetings. This is an opportunity to present information to highly engaged audiences and increase their knowledge.
Promotional Materials and Resources

A wealth of promotional material and resources are available for you to use as is or customize to reflect your organization's perspective.

Sample Blog Post (Organization & Agency Audiences)

Title: It’s time for change. The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health

Substance misuse and its harms are a pervasive problem in the United States. Not only are individuals and families struggling with the consequences of this serious issue, the effects have far-reaching consequences on workplaces, the health care system, families, states, and communities. In the United States:

- Almost 67 million people reported binge drinking in the past month.
- Nearly 48 million people said they used an illicit drug or misused prescription drugs in the past year.
- In 2015, nearly 21 million people had a medically diagnosed substance use disorder, but only 1 in 10 received any type of treatment.
- One in seven people (14.6 percent of the population) are expected to develop a substance use disorder at some point in their lives.
- Nearly 30,000 people died from overdosing on prescription drugs in 2014.
- Substance misuse and substance use disorders are estimated to cost society $442 billion each year in health care costs, lost productivity, and criminal justice costs.
- Prevention works. Treatment is effective. Recovery is possible for everyone.
- We can take action now by eradicating negative attitudes and changing the way people think about addiction.

It’s time for a change. Substance misuse and addiction are solvable problems. We have reason for hope and optimism. Through research, we have new knowledge and clear conclusions that addiction is a chronic brain disease that requires medical intervention, not moral judgment. Scientifically tested prevention programs and policies are available to reduce people’s risk of misusing alcohol and drugs. Treatment is effective and more than 25 million people are in remission from drug or alcohol use disorder. We also know that long-term recovery is possible. Ongoing recovery support services, like mutual aid, recovery coaches, and recovery housing, assist people in building a healthy, productive life.

We can, and must, inspire and catalyze action on this crisis. The launch of the historic report, The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health, addresses the issue in clear and understandable language. It shows us that everyone has a role to play in changing the conversation about substance use to improve the health, safety, and well-being of individuals and communities across our nation. The Report provides suggestions and recommended
actions for individuals, families, community leaders, health care professionals, the private sector, policy makers, and researchers.

I encourage you to visit the website to review the Report and related materials today. The information and findings will inspire and help you take action. Together we can improve the health of those we love and reduce the impact of substance misuse and addiction on our nation.

Sample Blog Post (Individual & Family Audiences)

Title: New Opportunities, New Hope. The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health

The scientific community has reached a clear conclusion: addiction to alcohol or drugs is a chronic brain disease that requires medical intervention, not moral judgment or punishment. And like other chronic conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, there are scientifically proven prevention, treatment, and recovery programs and strategies that can benefit individuals and families and enable them to live happy and healthy lives.

Substance misuse and substance use disorders are two of the most important public health issues we face today. Yet sadly, many have viewed substance use disorders as a moral failing. It is time to shift the way our society thinks about substance use disorders. The U.S. Surgeon General has released a historic report, The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health, that will move us in this direction and help us change the conversation about substance use disorders. Substance misuse affects all of us, and there is a role each of us can play in addressing substance misuse and its devastating health consequences.

The most recent data on substance use and addiction reveal that the problem is deepening and the consequences are becoming more deadly than ever, particularly overdose deaths related to prescription pain relievers and heroin. There is an urgent need to raise awareness and show support toward people and families struggling with these problems. The earlier prevention, screening, and treatment begin, the better the outcomes are likely to be.

Substance misuse and substance use disorders are solvable problems. We have reason for hope and optimism due to a deeper, science-based understanding of these issues and new opportunities presented by ongoing health reform efforts. Scientifically tested prevention programs and policies are available to reduce people’s risk for alcohol and drug misuse.

The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health provides suggestions and recommendations for individuals, families, and other stakeholders who play a critical role in supporting prevention, treatment, and recovery. You can help by reaching out if you think you or someone you know has a problem. It’s important for people to know they are not alone. If a loved one has a problem, be supportive, not judgmental. Recognize that substance use disorders are medical conditions that require medical treatment, not moral failings.
If you’re a parent, talk to your children about alcohol and drugs. The majority of people with substance use disorders start using substances during adolescence. Become informed about substances your child may encounter and the risks they face. Talking openly and honestly with your children is crucial.

You can also help by showing support toward people in recovery. We know that recovery is possible and extending kindness and empathy is an important part of encouraging people to seek treatment and supporting their recovery. We also encourage you to educate your community. Addressing substance misuse requires a public health approach that involves not only the health care system but also schools, civic groups, neighborhood associations, and other community organizations.

We can, and must, inspire change to address this crisis. I encourage you to visit the website to review the Report and related materials today. Together we can improve the health of those we love and reduce the impact of substance misuse and addiction.

Personal/Professional Email or Post

Dear <Friend/Colleagues>,

I’m sure you know that substance misuse is a pervasive problem in the United States. 66.7 million people aged 12 or older in the United States reported binge drinking in the past month and 20.8 million people aged 12 or older had a substance use disorder in 2015. Approximately 48 million people said they used an illicit drug or misused prescription drugs in the past year. Individuals, families, communities, and health care systems are struggling to cope with substance use and its consequences. **Substance misuse and substance use disorders are estimated to cost society a staggering $442 billion each year in health care costs, lost productivity, and criminal justice costs.**

It’s time for a change. Substance misuse and addiction are solvable problems. We have reason for hope and optimism. Through research, we have knowledge and a clear understanding that addiction is a chronic brain disease that requires medical intervention, not moral judgment. Scientifically proven prevention programs and policies are available to reduce people’s risk for alcohol and drug misuse. Treatment is effective and more than 25 million people are in remission from drug or alcohol use disorder. We also know that recovery is possible. Ongoing recovery support services, like mutual aid, recovery coaches, and recovery housing, assist people in building a healthy, productive life. **The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health addresses the issue in clear and understandable language. It shows us that everyone has a role to play in changing the conversation about substance misuse to improve the health, safety, and well-being of individuals and communities across our nation. The Report provides suggestions and recommendations for individuals, families, community leaders, law enforcement, health care professionals, the private sector, policy makers, and researchers.**
I encourage you to visit the website to review the Report and related materials today. The findings and recommendations will help you take action. Together we can improve the health of those we love and reduce the impact of substance misuse and substance use disorders in our communities and on our nation.

<Signed>

Twitter Posts

For Consumers: These messages can be shared by, and for, individuals, families, communities and the general public.

- #FacingAddiction 1 in 7 ppl will develop a #SubstanceUseDisorder. Let's work to prevent #addiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- In 2015, 20 mill ppl in US had a #SubstanceUseDisorder. Take action to reduce this #: #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- 4+ alcoholic drinks for women (5+ drinks for men) on 1 occasion is #BingeDrinking: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov #FacingAddiction
- #SubstanceUseDisorder is a medical illness caused by repeated misuse of a substance. #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- A severe #SubstanceUseDisorder is commonly called an addiction. Learn more: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov #FacingAddiction

For Providers: These messages can be used by health care providers as well as their professional organizations.

- #SubstanceUseDisorders are chronic brain diseases that can be treated. #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- In 7 ppl will develop a #SubstanceUseDisorder and need high-quality care. #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
For Advocates: These messages can be used by advocates and health advocacy groups but may also be shared by consumers and providers.

- #SubstanceMisuse costs $442 bill a year. More prevention & treatment lowers costs. #FacingAddiction http://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov
- #HealthCareReform increases access to #SubstanceUseDisorder treatment for people #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- Communities need effective policies & programs to prevent #Alcohol and #Drug misuse. #FacingAddiction http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
- #FacingAddiction Communities can improve awareness of available programs to address #SubstanceMisuse. http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

Twitter Images

These images can be used to accompany posts or used on their own.

These images are 506x253 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
Substance misuse can have serious consequences including:

- Heart and liver diseases
- Various forms of cancer
- HIV/AIDS

#FacingAddiction

1 in 7 people will develop a substance use disorder at some point in their lives.

#FacingAddiction

Cost comparison to U.S. each year:

- Diabetes: $245 billion
- Substance misuse & substance use disorders: $442 billion
- Alcohol: $193 billion
- Tobacco: $249 billion

#FacingAddiction
Facebook Posts

For Consumers: These messages can be shared by, and with, individuals, families, communities and the general public.

- Substance misuse is a serious issue. One in seven people will develop a substance use disorder at some point in their lives. You or someone you know may be dealing with this problem and feel alone. We all have a role to play—we can work together to support and improve our health and the health of our friends and family members. The latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral gives information you can use to learn more about substance misuse and substance use disorders as well as what you can do to prevent them #FacingAddiction: [http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov](http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov)

- Substance misuse and substance use disorders affect millions of Americans every year. The latest research shows that there are many effective programs for preventing and...
treatment of substance misuse. Learn more in the latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

- Did You Know: 4 or more alcoholic drinks for women and 5 or more drinks for men on one occasion is considered binge drinking? Alcohol misuse, including binge drinking, contributes to 88,000 deaths in the United States each year. The latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral gives information you can use to learn more about substance misuse and substance use disorders as well as what you can do to prevent them #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

- Did You Know: Substance use disorders are medical illnesses caused by repeated misuse of a substance? Substance misuse and substance use disorders affect millions of Americans every year. Learn more in the latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

- A severe substance use disorder is commonly called an addiction. The latest research shows that there are many effective programs for preventing and treating substance use disorders. Learn more in the latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

**For Providers:** These messages can be used by health care providers as well as their professional organizations.

- More than 20 million people in the U.S. had a substance use disorder in 2015. Research shows that substance use disorders are chronic but treatable brain disease that requires treatment, not moral judgment. Evidence-based treatments are available and can save lives and restore peoples’ health, well-being, and functioning. Together we can support high quality care for substance use disorders and ensure that they are treated like any other chronic condition. To learn more, read the latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

- Evidence shows that the quality, effectiveness, and safety of health care can be improved through the integration of services for substance use disorders with mainstream health care. The latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral provides more information #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

**For Advocates:** This message can be used by advocates and health advocacy groups but may also be shared by consumers and providers.

- Substance misuse and substance use disorders cost society an estimated $442 billion each year in the U.S. alone. Evidence-based prevention and treatments can reduce these costs. Read the latest report from the @USSurgeonGeneral, which provides evidence and recommendations for governments and policymakers to promote a public health approach to addressing substance misuse and substance use disorders #FacingAddiction: http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
Health reform efforts have created new opportunities to increase access to prevention and treatment services. Effective prevention programs and treatment and recovery services are available and can save lives and restore people’s health, well-being, and functioning. Learn more by reading the @USSurgeonGeneral report on alcohol, drugs, and health #FacingAddiction: [http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov](http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov)

Facebook Images
These images can be used to accompany posts or used on their own.

These images are 1200x630 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on [http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov](http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov)
1 in 7 people will develop a substance use disorder at some point in their lives.

Cost comparison to U.S. each year:

- Diabetes: $245 billion
- Substance misuse & substance use disorders: $193 billion
- Substance misuse & substance use disorders: $249 billion

There are more than 5,000 coalitions across the U.S. working to reduce substance misuse in their communities.

Source: CADCA, 2016
The yearly economic impact of substance misuse and substance use disorders on states and communities is $442 billion.

- $249 billion for alcohol misuse
- $193 billion for illicit drug use

#FacingAddiction
Website Banners/Badges

These images can be used on websites. They are included in the following sizes: 360x360, 504x342, 504x116, 600x190, and 116x504. You can use the following code in your HTML:

```html
<a href="http://addiction.substanceuse.gov/"> <img alt="Surgeon General's Report" border="0" src="INSERT http: LOCATION OF SAVED IMAGE" /></a>
```

These images are 116x504 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on [http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov](http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov)
These images are 504x116 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov

EMBARGOED until Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 3:01 AM EST
These images are 504x342 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
These images are 360x360 and can be downloaded from the Supplemental Materials page on http://Addiction.SurgeonGeneral.gov
Newsletter/Listserv Post

Substance misuse, the use of alcohol and drugs in a manner that causes harm to users or those around them, is a pervasive problem in the United States. Prolonged, repeated misuse of a substance can lead to a substance use disorder, a medical illness that impairs health and function. Severe substance use disorders are commonly referred to as addiction.

Approximately 48 million people said they used an illicit drug or misused prescription drugs in the past year. Individuals, families, communities, and health care systems are struggling to cope with substance use and its consequences. Substance misuse and substance use disorders are estimated to cost society $442 billion each year in health care costs, lost productivity, and criminal justice costs.

It’s time for a change. Substance misuse and substance use disorders are solvable problems. We have reason for hope and optimism. Abundant science shows that addiction is a chronic brain disease that requires medical intervention, not moral judgment. Scientifically tested prevention programs and policies are available to reduce people’s risk for alcohol and drug misuse. Treatment is effective and more than 25 million people are in remission from drug or alcohol use disorder. Recovery support services, like mutual aid groups, recovery coaches and recovery housing, can assist people in building a healthy, productive life following addiction.

The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health addresses the issue in clear and understandable language. It shows us that everyone has a role to play in changing the conversation about substance misuse to improve the health, safety, and well-being of individuals and communities across our nation. The Report provides suggestions and recommendations for individuals, families, community leaders, law enforcement, health care professionals, the private sector, policy makers, and researchers.

Visit the website to review the Report and related materials. The findings and recommendations will help you educate your community. Together, we can improve the health of those we love and reduce the impact of substance misuse and substance use disorders on our nation.

Promotional Video

A promotional video on the Report is available and you can link to it on websites, in blog posts, social media posts, and other communications.