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Insights from the Healing American Healthcare Coalition™

Make America Healthy Again? TMR's skeptical!

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From the Editor: America goes it alone for the next pandemic as the Trump administration cuts jeopardize food safety and abandon science. UnitedHealth Group's problems continue to mount. Click on the headline for the full article; subscribe to TMR for \$25/year [here](#).



[WHO signs international pandemic response treaty without the U.S.](#), by Sammy Westfall, Washington Post, 5/20/25

TMR Topline – The World Health Organization adopted the world's first agreement on how to cooperate and respond to future pandemics by a 124-0 vote with 11 abstentions. Notably absent was the US after President Trump accused the WHO of "mis-handling" the coronavirus pandemic, and withdrew the US on Inauguration Day. The WHO Pandemic Agreement includes measures to bolster international coordination on pandemic preparedness and response, outlining that states should strengthen regulatory, research and domestic health systems. It also encourages countries to share skills and facilitate equitable access to pandemic-related health products and tools. HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. slammed the widely praised agreement and instead called for a "reboot [of] the whole system," alleging that WHO has become "mired in bureaucratic bloat, entrenched paradigms, conflicts of interest and international power politics."



[US overdose deaths fell 27% last year, the largest one-year decline ever seen](#), by Mike Stobbe and Geoff

Mulvihill, Associated Press, 5/14/25

TMR Topline – An estimated 80,000 people died from overdoses in 2024, 30,000 less than in 2023 based on provisional data from the CDC. All but two states saw declines last year. Experts mention several factors contributing to the decline, including:

- Increased availability of the overdose-reversing drug naloxone.
- Expanded addiction [treatment](#).
- Shifts in [how people use](#) drugs.
- The growing impact of billions of dollars in opioid lawsuit settlement money.
- The number of at-risk Americans is shrinking, after waves of deaths in older adults and a [shift in teens](#) and younger adults away from the drugs that cause most deaths.



[MAHA report blames 'overmedicalization,' pharma's influence for children's poor health](#), by Dave Muoio, Fierce Healthcare, 5/22/25

TMR Topline – The long-awaited 68-page [MAHA Report](#) titled *Make Our Children Healthy Again: Assessment* has been released. The MAHA Commission now has 82 days to develop a strategy document for realigning federal practices to address the four highlighted factors:

1. The Shift to Ultra-Processed Food;
2. The Cumulative Load of Chemicals in our Environment'
3. The Crisis of Childhood Behavior in the Digital Age; and
4. The Overmedicalization of Our Kids.

The report's takeaways largely align with HHS Secretary RFK Jr.'s advocacy priorities prior to entering the administration. President Trump described the findings around increased incidence of health conditions like obesity (affecting more than one child in five who is over 6 years of age) and autism spectrum disorder (1 in 31 children by age 8) as "alarming. Unlike other administrations, we will not be silenced or intimidated by the corporate lobbyists or special interests." PhRMA released a statement commending the administration's interest in children's chronic disease but stressing that "medicines

are part of the solution, not the cause of chronic disease" and warned of "several untrue or misleading claims" included in the report. Echoing arguments from vaccine skeptics, the report says, "there has been limited scientific inquiry into the links between vaccines and chronic disease, the impacts of vaccine injury and conflicts of interest in the development of the vaccine schedule" and calls for "more rigorous clinical trial designs" for childhood vaccines. The portion of the report focused on children's declining physical activity and "mental health crisis" points to factors such as insufficient sleep, screen time, loneliness and social media. The report has noteworthy omissions on children's health, including those from government agencies like the CDC, such as [Maternal health and preterm birth](#), gun violence and recreational use of addictive substances such as nicotine, alcohol and opioids.



[What Does the Future of Food Safety Look Like? — The Trump administration's actions at FDA are cause for concern](#), by Peter Lurie, MD, MPH, MedPage Today, 5/2/25

TMR Topline — Dr. Lurie previously served as the Associate Commissioner for Public Health Strategy and Analysis at the FDA which normally regulates almost [80% of the food supply](#). The CDC estimates that [128,000 people are hospitalized](#) each year with foodborne illnesses, and 3,000 die. Lurie is highly critical of DOGE cuts to an already understaffed federal food safety system and warns that [shifting](#) more food inspection responsibility to cash-strapped states will result in fewer inspections. Lurie also noted that the [USDA also withdrew](#) a Biden-era plan to require poultry companies to limit salmonella contamination in their products that would have prevented [up to 4,300 salmonella illnesses](#) per year.



[Trump nominates Kennedy ally Casey Means as new US surgeon general](#), by Christy Santhosh, Reuters, 5/7/25

TMR Topline — Casey Means, a physician and health entrepreneur has been nominated to serve as Surgeon General, responsible for providing the best scientific information available on how to improve their health and reduce risk of illness and injury. She trained as an otolaryngologist, but without finishing her training to practice so-called functional medicine. Dr. Means is a vocal MAHA advocate.



[DeSantis signs bill banning fluoride in Florida water systems](#), by Nathaniel Weixel, The HILL, 5/1/25

TMR Topline — Florida Surgeon

General Joseph Ladapo issued guidance in November against community water fluoridation, citing its potential health effects. State lawmakers approved legislation in support of this ban in April over the objections of dentists and public health advocates. Florida's bill adds to the growing backlash against fluoride. Although it is considered one of the great public health achievements of the 20th century, HHS Secretary Kennedy has often expressed skepticism of water fluoridation. Water fluoridation began in 1945, and the CDC recommends community fluoridation as a cost-effective way to improve Americans' oral health.



[Revealed: UnitedHealth secretly paid nursing homes to reduce hospital transfers](#), by George

Joseph, The Guardian, 5/21/25

TMR Topline — UnitedHealth Group has secretly paid nursing homes thousands in bonuses to help slash hospital transfers for ailing residents — part of a series of cost-cutting tactics that has saved the company millions, but at times risked residents' health. UHG's Medicare Advantage plans cover more than 55,000 long-term nursing home residents in nearly 2,000 nursing homes in small towns and urban commercial strips. To reduce residents' hospital visits, UnitedHealth has offered nursing homes an array of financial sweeteners including "Premium Dividend" and "Shared Savings" payments that boosted nursing homes' bottom lines. Tactics included pressuring their on-site nurse practitioners to persuade MA members to change their "code status" to DNR even when patients had clearly expressed a desire that all available treatments be used to keep them alive, and using "Admits per thousand" as a key performance indicator.

TMR's Take: UHG's problems continue to mount. Earlier in May, [CEO Andrew Witty](#) resigned "for personal reasons" and was replaced, effective immediately, by the company's former CEO and current chairman, Stephen J. Hemsley. The combination of the Change Healthcare cyberattack and "higher than expected" medical costs in its MA business appears to have done him in.