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Vermont Physician Group Joins Suit to Stop Federal Government's Deletion of Vital Medical Data and Resources

Online Disappearance of Taxpayer-Funded Resources Has Harmed Public Health Efforts at All Levels of Medical Practice

Montpelier -- Today, the Vermont Medical Society (VMS) joined a group of nine medical organizations and public health nonprofits to sue the federal government to stop the deletion of vital public health and science data. Since January, the federal executive branch has deleted numerous websites that medical providers, scientists and public health professionals rely upon, on issues ranging from pregnancy risks to opioid-use disorder to the AIDS epidemic.

The lawsuit, filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington, would enforce federal law and require the administration to restore deleted websites and stop any further removal of public health data. The suit highlights the administration's "arbitrary, capricious and unreasoned" decisions to delete these critical resources, which federal law requires be made available to the American people.

"The members of the Vermont Medical Society are proud to join this extremely important case. We have heard from our members that the loss of federal data and disclaimers added to certain websites have already led to more families delaying or declining vaccines, patients opting out of demographic questions, and barriers to providing appropriate patient care and information," according to Katie Marvin, MD, President of the Vermont Medical Society, the largest professional association representing physicians in Vermont.

"Vermont clinicians are dedicated to providing honest, accurate, science-based information to help patients and communities make informed decisions about their health, and joining this litigation to restore federal sources of information is one critical step in that direction."

Washington State Medical Association et al. v. Kennedy et al. highlights the significant impact of the deleted information: preventing doctors and nurses from providing critical information to their patients; stopping nonprofit health organizations from utilizing data to inform cutting-edge research; and impeding efforts by local governments to track the spread of disease and address behavioral health crises.

The lawsuit's nine plaintiffs are: Washington State Medical Association, Washington State Nurses Association, Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, AcademyHealth, Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, Fast-Track Cities Institute, International Association of Providers of AIDS Care, National LGBT Cancer Network and Vermont Medical Society.

The Defendants include Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and the leaders of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, Health Resources and Services Administration, and Office of Personnel Management.

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About the Vermont Medical Society: The Vermont Medical Society is the leading voice of physicians in the state and is dedicated to optimizing the health of all Vermonters and the health care environment in which Vermont physicians and physician assistants practice medicine. The Society serves its 3,100 members through public policy advocacy on the state and federal levels, as well as by providing legal, administrative and educational support, producing a rich flow of news and information and offering member benefits that increase medical practice effectiveness and efficiency. For more information, visit www.VTMD.org.