

October 5, 2023

# Strategies for Improving Public Understanding of FDA-Regulated Products

# Housekeeping



Due to the meeting size, your microphone and video will remain off during the meeting.



This public meeting is being recorded. The slides, transcript, and video recording will be available on the FDA Foundation website after the meeting.



Please share your questions and comments for the speakers using the Zoom Q&A function.

# Agenda

- 10:30 AM Report Overview: Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 10:40 AM Medical Student Presentations on Health Misunderstanding
- 10:55 AM Panel Discussion: Stakeholder Reaction
- 11:55 AM Commissioner Remarks with Q&A
- 12:25 PM Closing Remarks

# Background

The digital health information environment and limited public trust in government institutions represent pressing challenges for the FDA

The spread of misinformation has accelerated, in part because more people than ever are accessing health information on the internet and via social media<sup>1</sup>

FDA Commissioner Dr. Robert Califf has highlighted that the growing problem of misinformation undermines confidence in science and public health institutions<sup>2</sup>

8 in 10

Americans seek health-related information each year<sup>3</sup>

73%

Find this information on the internet and social media<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Romeo, John. "[Opinion] Disinformation Is a Rising Tide. Here's How to Address It." World Economic Forum, Oliver Wyman, <https://bit.ly/3Kae47G>.

<sup>2</sup> FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf, M.D., MACC. "Remarks by Commissioner Robert Califf to the 2023 Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI) Annual Conference," May 17, 2023. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/speeches-fda-officials/remarks-commissioner-robert-califf-2023-food-and-drug-law-institute-fdli-annual-conference-05172023>.

<sup>3</sup> Pasquetto, Irene V, et al. Misinfo Rx, A Toolkit for Healthcare Providers, [https://misinfoRx.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/hghi\\_Misinfo\\_Rx\\_NEW\\_v22-003.pdf](https://misinfoRx.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/hghi_Misinfo_Rx_NEW_v22-003.pdf). Accessed 26 Sept. 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

# Developing Our Report

Commissioner Califf requested that the Reagan-Udall Foundation for the FDA conduct research and consult with experts to better understand how consumers find, consume, and perceive health information—especially regarding FDA-regulated products<sup>1</sup>

From January to September 2023, the Foundation conducted an in-depth research process, including:



**Literature review**



**Polling**



**Listening sessions**



**Individual interviews**



**Roundtable  
conversations**

This research yielded our report that provides a set of observations, potential strategies, and potential tactics for the FDA to consider

<sup>1</sup> The Reagan-Udall Foundation for the FDA is an independent 501(c)(3) organization created by Congress to advance the mission of the Agency.

# Findings

Clear, consistent communication, both to consumers directly and via media channels, is critical to the FDA's mission to protect and promote public health

Consumers trust policy—and the scientific evidence on which it is based—if communicated to them properly

Sound science, sound policy, and sound communication are each fundamental to the Agency's success

Executing many of the strategies outlined in this report will require additional investment of resources and time by the FDA and its partners



# Key Themes

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## “Prebunk” health misinformation

The FDA has an opportunity to take a more proactive approach to anticipating, listening for, spotting, and defusing health misconceptions before they escalate

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## Deliver credible information to consumers

The FDA can leverage more communications channels, messengers, and mediums to reach the public

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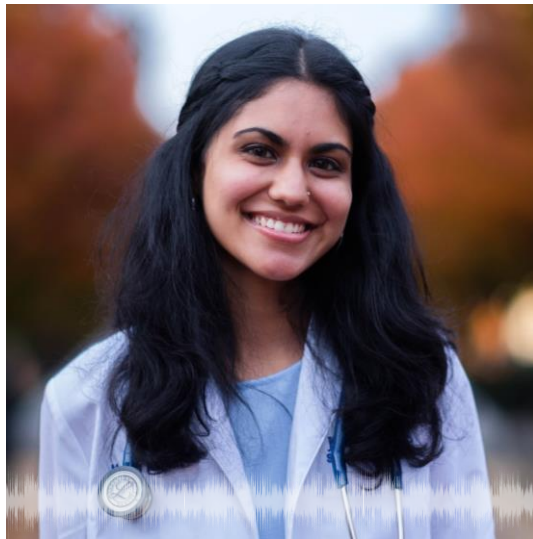
## Tone matters

To build trust, the FDA must approach communications with an emphasis on clarity and humility

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Everyone at the FDA—not just professional communicators—has a role to play in improving public understanding of FDA-regulated products

# Medical Student Presentations on Health Misunderstanding



Meher Kalkat

Johns Hopkins University  
School of Medicine



Elina Kurkurina

Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine  
at Quinnipiac University



# Panel



**William Alvarez**

PharmD, BCPS,  
Wolters Kluwer



**Richard Baron**

MD, American Board of  
Internal Medicine



**Raven Baxter**

MD, The Science  
Haven



**Lori Freeman**

MBA, National Assoc. of  
County and City Health  
Officials



**Emily Moyer**

PhD, International  
Fresh Produce  
Association



**Michael Wagner**

PhD, University of  
Wisconsin-Madison

# Commissioner Remarks



**Robert M. Califf, MD, MACC**  
Commissioner of Food and Drugs  
US Food and Drug Administration

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**Thank you**