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AADOCR Statement on Devastating HHS Job Cuts

Alexandria, VA - The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) strongly disapproves of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) unprecedented mass layoffs of the federal health workforce. Last week, HHS [announced](#) it would be reducing its full-time employees by nearly 25%, including cuts at CDC, CMS, FDA, and NIH. Although the initial HHS announcement outlined that the NIH cuts of 1,200 employees primarily affect centralizing procurement, human resources, and communications, [STAT news](#) reported a much broader and more troubling reality. Yesterday's layoffs included NIH institute directors, senior lab leaders, and scientists conducting critical research in areas such as sickle cell, neurologic disorders, and pandemic preparedness.

NIH Institute Directors (or Acting Directors) of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the National Institute of Nursing Research, the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, the National Human Genome Institute, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development all received layoff notices.

At the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), an estimated 17% of staff have been laid off – an estimate that does not include additional personnel who may be leaving under the “voluntary” early-retirement program.

Across other HHS agencies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has dissolved entire divisions, including the Division of Oral Health. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has eliminated the Chief Dental Officer role. The full extent of the cuts across all HHS agencies is still coming into focus.

“It’s hard to fathom how these layoffs square with the HHS mission ‘to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans, by providing for effective health and human services and by fostering sound, sustained advances in the sciences underlying medicine, public health, and social service,’” said AADOCR Chief Executive Officer Christopher Fox.

The recent Administration’s actions to eliminate entire federal agency divisions and terminate thousands of federal workers appear to violate the Constitution, which grants Congress the “power of the purse” to appropriate funds. The Executive Branch is obligated to administer those funds in accordance with the law. It is now up to Congress to reassert its statutory authority and demand

the Administration reinstate congressionally approved funds for each Federal department, agency and program, as required by law.

“I encourage all AADOCR members to contact their U.S. Senators and Representatives to express their serious concerns about these HHS job cuts and research funding freezes, and to share the devastating impacts they are having on our community and our institutions”, advised AADOCR President Effie Ioannidou. “I fear the recent actions by this Administration are jeopardizing the U.S.’s longstanding position as a world leader in science and biomedical research.”

About AADOCR

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being. AADOCR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and students based in academic, government, non-profit and private-sector institutions who share our mission. AADOCR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research. Learn more at www.aadocr.org.