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Public Health Leaders Discuss the Importance of Sustained Public Health Funding in the Post COVID-19 Landscape

Trust for America's Health (TFAH) President & CEO J. Nadine Gracia, and Coalition for Health Funding's (CHF) Executive Director Erin Will Morton issued the following statement regarding the June 22nd Beyond Emergency Funding: Sustaining Public Health Funding in the Post-COVID Landscape discussion.

(Washington, DC) -- Trust for America's Health and the Coalition for Health Funding are proud to have hosted the *Beyond Emergency Funding: Sustaining Public Health Funding in the Post-COVID Landscape* discussion on June 22, 2022. This discussion included three expert panelists; Dr. Gracia, Trust for America's Health, Lisa Macon Harrison, MPH, Health Director, Granville Vance Public Health (North Carolina), and the current President of the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and Dr. Michael Fraser, Chief Executive Officer, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. CHF's president, Mila Becker, moderated the event.

According to the panelists, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated a clear need for a well-funded, broad-based public health infrastructure and workforce at all levels. Our organizations urge lawmakers to increase annual funding to achieve these goals and create a sustainable, long-term funding strategy for public health beyond emergency supplemental funding.

The panelists emphasized the following issues during the session:

- The public health system our country needs cannot be built on the boom-and-bust cycle of emergency funding.
- The system needs long-term, flexible funding. Short term and inflexible funding lines for public health make investing in essential infrastructure, workforce, and cross-cutting approaches to prevention, including addressing the social determinants of health, impossible.
- Public health emergency response is more expensive than funding core public health infrastructure. Billions of dollars spent in the years before the COVID-19 pandemic could have saved the trillions of dollars spent in response to the crisis and would have saved lives.
- We must invest in the public health programs and workforce needed to prevent illness and injury. Doing so would decrease the amount of money now spent on treating preventable disease.
- We must be nimbler and better prepared in order to save lives during the next public health emergency. Core public health services most in need of sustained investment are:
 - Modernized data systems that provide real-time data for decision-making.
 - Sustained funding for recruitment and retention of a larger and more diverse public health workforce.

- Programs to achieve health equity – during the pandemic many health departments increased their engagement with community leaders and organizations. Those partnerships and networks should be sustained and grown.
- We are approaching a COVID “funding cliff” – emergency funding has been spent or is expiring, but core public health services still need to be provided, particularly in those communities where health inequities were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Listen to the full session at: <https://www.tfah.org/webinars-briefings/beyond-emergency-funding/>

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About TFAH

Trust for America’s Health is a non-partisan public health policy, research and advocacy organization that envisions a nation that values the health and well-being of all and where prevention and health equity are foundational to policymaking at all levels of society. [Trust for America's Health \(tfah.org\)](https://www.tfah.org)

About CHF

The Coalition for Health Funding works to preserve public health investments in the interest of all Americans. Our 81 member organizations together represent more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers. [Coalition for Health Funding \(publichealthfunding.org\)](https://publichealthfunding.org)