

Navigating a Complex Health Information Landscape: Select Projects of the National Academies

The health information landscape is complex and rapidly changing in ways that make it harder than ever to communicate effectively. The word “infodemic” is increasingly used to describe aspects of the sheer volume of health information that people encounter every day and in times of crisis, both accurate and inaccurate, and old models of providing scientific information and advice have been disrupted, demanding new skills and capacities.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine have launched several new efforts to leverage the best available social science to help public health leaders at all levels navigate the challenges of communicating and building trust with a diverse nation to improve health and wellbeing.

UPCOMING EVENTS FROM THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

WORKSHOP: THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT’S ROLE

In March 2023, the National Academies will host *Effective Health Communication in the Current Information Environment and the Role of the Federal Government: A Workshop*, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This workshop will explore the health information environment, examine the role of federal health agencies within this information environment, and identify the capacities needed across US government to support effective health communication moving forward.

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WORKSHOP: INFODEMICS IN PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

In April 2023, the National Academies will host a workshop titled *The Public Health Infodemic and Trust in Public Health as a National Security Threat*, at the request of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that will build on the March 2023 event and offer a specific focus on the current knowledge of and experiences with infodemics in public health emergencies. The workshop will examine the impact of infodemics on trust and confidence in the public health enterprise, and effective tools, practices, and strategies for federal, state, tribal, local, and territorial public health agencies and others to address infodemics.

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CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

The National Academies will continue connecting experts with leaders and staff from federal agencies after its scheduled workshops to support plans for putting ideas from the workshops into action.

CONSENSUS STUDY REPORT: IN PROGRESS

Over the next year, the National Academies will carry out a new consensus study, *Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science*, that will characterize the nature and scope of the problem of misinformation about science and its differential impacts on different communities; identify solutions to limit its spread; and provide guidance on interventions, policies, and research toward reducing harms caused from misinformation. The effort, funded by the National Science Foundation, will involve public information gathering workshops and is due to be released in Spring 2024.

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