



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

May 20, 2014

Larry A. Greene, M.D.
Chairperson, National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics
3311 Toledo Road, Room 2402
Hyattsville, MD 20782

Dear Dr. Greene:

Thank you for your recent letter on the important issue of the usability, use, and usefulness of selected online U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) open data resources. Your observations and recommendations are extremely valuable as we continue to promote and expand public access and use of HHS data.

I fully appreciate the effort that went into preparing these thoughtful observations and recommendations from the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS) and the efforts of the Work Group on Data Access and Use. They will guide the Department's consideration and actions on the important goal of liberating data in ways useful to the public, the professions, the research community, and federal agencies.

The letter provides a clear direction in planning future iterations in the manner and timeliness in which HHS data are offered to the public. The recommendations warrant careful consideration of the approaches that have been identified for overcoming current limitations in the chain of activities from data collection to release of the data to serve multiple user purposes. Your overarching set of recommendations about high value time-sensitive data could be particularly relevant in identifying and prioritizing near-term activities.

The Department values the observations and recommendations of the NCVHS and looks forward to the NCVHS's ongoing engagement and guidance in this area.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Sebelius