

PPC Action Alert

Tell Your Senators to Support AHRQ and Restore Health Services Research Funding

We are reaching out with a **timely advocacy opportunity** to address ongoing disruptions to crucial health services research infrastructure at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Background on AHRQ: AHRQ is the only federal agency that supports health services research and primary care research that provides the evidence to help providers, patients, and policymakers make informed decisions. Unlike NIH, which primarily studies disease and tests treatments in controlled clinical trials, AHRQ studies how health care is delivered after those treatments leave the laboratory. It evaluates whether they reach patients in rural settings, whether they are implemented safely, what they cost, and whether critical access hospitals can realistically use them. No other federal agency performs this function.

State of Play: On July 15, AHRQ announced the cancellation of nearly every grant that it had previously awarded, including research grants, career development awards, institutional training grants, and research infrastructure programs. More than 150 grants have been cancelled so far, representing nearly \$250 million in lost funding. These actions raise serious concerns that appropriated funds are not being obligated for the purposes authorized and funded by Congress.

Since April 2025, AHRQ's operations have largely ground to a halt, having not issued a single new research grant. An estimated 80 percent of AHRQ's staff is no longer at the Agency due to actions taken by the Trump administration, including the entirety of the staff overseeing the extramural grant program that reviews grant proposals, issues awards, and manages AHRQ-supported projects. Since October 1, 2025, the Agency has only awarded \$13 million in noncompetitive continuing grants, barely 5 percent of what Congress directed AHRQ to spend in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. In the FY26 appropriations bill, Congress provided \$345.38 million for AHRQ and required the agency to maintain minimum staffing necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

Several affected projects directly address priorities AHRQ itself has publicly identified in the cancellation letters, including patient safety, antibiotic resistance, overmedication of children, telehealth, digital health, and reducing health disparities. Examples of affected pediatric research projects include improving early autism screening in children, helping children with asthma access care, helping providers recognize child abuse, improving health care for children in foster care, improving postpartum care for mothers and infants, and training the next generation of health services researchers.

The consequences of these actions have been immediate and widespread. Health services research programs across the country have been forced to pause work or lay off staff. AHRQ-funded research is

crucial for pediatric health because it helps ensure that evidence-based care is implemented effectively in real-world settings and supports the delivery of high-quality, safe, coordinated care for children and families.

That's where we need your help. Congress needs to hear directly from academic pediatricians and researchers about why health services research is crucial for children and families. Please educate your lawmakers about the importance of AHRQ and urge them to support efforts to restore the agency's research funding and capacity.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) is circulating a [bipartisan letter](#) and asking his Senate colleagues to join him in signing it as a public show of support for health services research at AHRQ. The letter seeks information about the decision-making process that led to these cancellations and urges the Administration to immediately rescind them and ensure that funding appropriated by Congress is administered in accordance with the law.

But the deadline for your senators to sign this letter is August 5 – so we need you to take action now! **Contact your U.S. senators today and urge them to sign the Blumenthal letter of support for rescinding grant cancellations at AHRQ!** A template email and phone script specifically for contacting your U.S. senators is available below.

Contact Your Senators Today

Reach out to your U.S. senators today and urge them to sign Sen. Blumenthal's letter calling on HHS to rescind the recent AHRQ grant cancellations and restore support for health services research. You can reach out to them by phone or email. If you have time, you can call and then follow-up via email to maximize your impact.

By Phone: You can call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to be connected to your senator's office. You can also find your U.S. senators by visiting [Senate.gov](#) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. The contact information for their Washington, DC office is available on their websites.

Talking points

- Hello. My name is {First and last name} from {Town}. I am an academic pediatrician specializing in {insert your area of research expertise e.g., pediatric endocrinology, etc.}, and I am calling today to urge {Senator's name} to sign Senator Blumenthal's letter calling on HHS to rescind grant cancellations at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).
- On July 15, 2026, researchers from across the country began receiving notices that funding for AHRQ grants already underway had been cancelled, despite Congress approving funding for the agency in the FY26 appropriations bill.
- For more than a year, AHRQ had not been functioning as Congress intended and has lost 80 percent of its staff during that time. As a result, grant funding significantly slowed, researchers stopped receiving continuation awards, and new research projects were never launched.

- AHRQ is the only federal agency that supports health services research and primary care research that provides the evidence to help providers, patients, and policymakers make informed decisions. AHRQ-supported research helps improve patient safety, reduce health care costs, expand access to care, and ensures that clinicians have the evidence they need to deliver high-quality care.
- *[If you've been personally impacted by these cancellations, share more information about your project, how your work has been impacted, and what is being lost as a result of these cuts]*
- I urge {Senator's name} to support efforts to restore AHRQ's research funding and capacity by signing Senator Blumenthal's letter calling on HHS to immediately rescind all of AHRQ's grant cancellations. The deadline for joining is August 5.
- Thank you for all you do.

By Email: You can email your senators through their website. To find your U.S. senators, visit [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. Email your U.S. senators through the contact form on their websites by customizing the talking points below.

Email text:

Subject: Support AHRQ and Restore Health Services Research Funding!

As a constituent and academic pediatrician, I am urging you to sign Senator Blumenthal's letter calling on HHS to rescind grant cancellations at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

On July 15, 2026, AHRQ announced the cancellation of nearly every grant that it had previously awarded, despite Congress appropriating funding for the agency. More than 150 grants have been cancelled so far, representing nearly \$250 million in lost funding.

For more than a year, AHRQ had not been functioning as Congress intended and has lost 80 percent of its staff during that time. As a result, grant funding significantly slowed, researchers stopped receiving continuation awards, and new research projects were never launched.

AHRQ is the only federal agency that supports health services research and primary care research that provides the evidence to help providers, patients, and policymakers make informed decisions. Unlike NIH, which primarily studies disease and tests treatments in controlled clinical trials, AHRQ studies how health care is delivered after those treatments leave the laboratory. AHRQ-supported research helps improve patient safety, reduce health care costs, expand access to care, and ensures that clinicians have the evidence they need to deliver high-quality care.

[If you've been personally impacted by these cancellations, share more information about your project, how your work has been impacted, and what is being lost as a result of these cuts]

I urge {Senator's name} to support efforts to restore AHRQ's research funding and capacity by signing Senator Blumenthal's letter calling on HHS to immediately rescind all of AHRQ's grant cancellations. Contact Kasandra Navarro in Sen. Blumenthal's office for more information. The deadline for joining is August 5.

Thank you for all you do.