



June 3, 2016,

Dominic Mancini
Deputy Director
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC

Subject: Request for Emergency Review and Clearance

Dear Mr. Mancini,

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR Part 1320, *Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public*, I request that the proposed information collection request (ICR) "Surgeon General's Pledge to Stem the Opioid Epidemic" be processed in accordance with section 1320.12 Emergency Processing.

I have determined that this information must be collected prior to the expiration of time periods established under Part 1320, and that this information is essential to the U.S. Surgeon General's mission to communicate the best available public health information to the American people. The goal of this ICR is to significantly diminish the amount of opioid misuse, abuse, addiction and overdose. Nearly two million people in the U.S. have a prescription opioid use disorder, and the number of opioid overdose death have quadrupled since 1999. The epidemic is contributing to increased heroin use and the spread of HIV and hepatitis C among IV drug users.

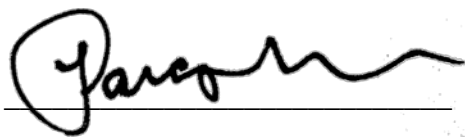
Next week, the Surgeon General will mail a letter to 2.3 million prescribers (doctors, dentists, nurse practitioners, etc.) calling on them to improve their prescribing practices and connect patients with addiction to evidence-based treatment programs. The Surgeon General will invite recipients of the letter to take a pledge on the TurnTheTideRx.org web site, where clinicians will be asked to share data outlined in the ICR (first name, last name, email address, zip code, profession and specialty). The Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) plans to use this information to engage prescribers with the latest information on techniques to prevent and treat opioid use disorders (such as the new prescriber guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

OSG needs to implement the information collection by June 6, in order to begin a soft launch of the web site. After a week of testing the site to ensure functionality, OSG will launch it publicly in conjunction with the Surgeon General's opioid engagement tour of 10 cities beginning on June 13. The Surgeon General is also scheduled to appear on national media where he will direct clinicians in the audience to use the web site as both a resource and as an avenue to receive direct communications from him about the epidemic.

OSG has been unable to begin this important initiative because of previously unresolved issues around how and where the requested information will be stored and secured. Those issues have now been resolved. Further delays will impede the success of the campaign, which has been publicly announced by the White House and the Secretary of HHS.

Please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency clearance by close of business June 6, 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Parag", written over a horizontal line.

Parag V. Mehta, MPA
Chief of Staff, Office of the Surgeon General
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health