



\$100 Million Won't Fix Addiction if HHS Keeps Undermining What Works

Nina C. Christie, The American Association for the Advancement of Science

On Feb. 2, the Department of Health and Human Services **announced** that it was investing \$100 million in what it called "Great American Recovery." This funding will support a pilot program in eight U.S. cities focused on court-ordered treatment, psychiatric care, crisis intervention, and recovery-oriented housing. It rejects harm-reduction and housing-first approaches. In the announcement, Secretary **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** says, "addiction begins in isolation and ends in reconnection."

On its face, the new program seems to have strong scientific grounding: Social connection is central to recovery from substance use disorders. As studies have shown, and as I found in my own doctoral dissertation on social connection and substance use, social relationships emerge as a critical factor, both in terms of the **risk of isolation** and the benefits of **social supports** in **recovery**.