

# In New Letter, APS Encourages Psychological Science Participation in U.S. COVID-19 Response

April 28, 2022



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been at the forefront of the U.S. COVID-19 response and has worked to prepare the country for future health emergencies. However, the degree to which it has drawn on psychological science expertise has been limited. In a new letter to the head of HHS, APS has encouraged the integration of psychological science in the agency's response so that its ongoing efforts can be most effective.

In its letter, sent to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra on April 21, 2022, APS highlighted some of the many ways that psychological science can contribute to pandemic preparedness and response, noting that our field can help us understand individuals' decisions to accept safe vaccines, encourage following and sharing accurate health information, and promote acting in ways that further individual and collective health. The letter follows on [a June 22, 2021 letter APS sent to Becerra](#) with a similar message.

Importantly, the new letter from APS highlights recent language from Congress advising the department to include psychological scientists at every level of its response to COVID-19 and future public health emergencies. This statement from Congress in part reflects APS's work throughout 2021 to educate and inform lawmakers about the important contributions psychological science can make to pandemic preparedness and response. [Learn more about Congress's statement by clicking here.](#)

"APS has reviewed HHS and other government pandemic committees and panels, and we agree with Congress that these groups need psychological scientists and research psychology expertise. Indeed, all units of HHS can benefit from the knowledge and technical skills that psychological scientists possess," wrote APS Executive Director/CEO Robert Gropp in the letter to HHS.

Additionally, APS's letter also highlighted the work of the [APS Global Collaboration on COVID-19](#), which illustrates examples of the many ways that psychological science can contribute to the COVID-19 crisis and others.

APS will continue to work with HHS and other government groups involved in pandemic response, preparedness, and recovery to ensure that psychological science expertise is represented in all places where APS members' research shows that it is needed.

[The full APS letter to HHS Secretary Becerra can be found here.](#)

*Interested in the topic of psychological science and how it can contribute to public health? Be sure to catch a special CDC-chaired session at APS 2022 titled "Leveraging Psychological Science to Promote COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake During a Public Health Emergency." [Learn more here.](#)*