



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | October 24, 2017

MHCF Contact: Melinda Buchheit | (406)451-7060, [melinda.buchheit@mthcf.org](mailto:melinda.buchheit@mthcf.org)

Department of Justice Contact: Eric Sell | (406)444-2031, [eric.sell@mt.gov](mailto:eric.sell@mt.gov)

Governor's Office Contact: Ronja Abel | (406)444-9725, [rabel@mt.gov](mailto:rabel@mt.gov)

**Montana Healthcare Foundation Announces Major Substance Use Disorder Summit**  
*Former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy to speak*

*Bozeman, Mont.* – The Montana Healthcare Foundation (MHCF) announced today that a Montana Substance Use Disorder Summit will be held on Tuesday, November 7 at the Helena Great Northern Hotel. The summit is hosted by MHCF in collaboration with the Montana Department of Justice, the Governor's Office, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Public Health and Human Services. The summit follows a series of listening sessions around the state and will focus on identifying solutions to this devastating problem.

Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, M. D., who served as the 19<sup>th</sup> Surgeon General of the United States (from December 2014 to April 2017), will keynote the event. As the Surgeon General, he issued the first [Surgeon General's Report on Substance Use and Addiction](#), calling the nation to action to address this deadly disease.

"The Summit brings together leaders and professionals from around the state, national experts, and Montanans affected by this devastating illness," said MHCF CEO Dr. Aaron Wernham. "This event offers a much-needed opportunity to identify practical solutions for our state."

Approximately 300 invited leaders in health, criminal justice and corrections, state and tribal lawmakers, and affected individuals will attend. Speakers include Attorney General Tim Fox, Lieutenant Governor Mike Cooney, DPHHS Director Sheila Hogan, Department of Corrections Director Reginald Michael, and panels of state and tribal experts. Attendance is constrained by space, but the Foundation today opened registration for a limited number of remaining seats. The entire event will be live-streamed: details and registration for livestreaming can be found on [MHCF's website](#).

"Substance abuse comes in many forms, affecting Montanans in some of the most horrific ways imaginable," said Attorney General Tim Fox. "Through our [Aid Montana initiative](#), my office is working to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to address all forms of substance abuse from every angle, not just law enforcement. I want to thank the Montana Healthcare Foundation for putting this event together, and for all of the work they do to solve this incredibly complex problem."

"We've worked together to find Montana-made solutions to fight substance abuse, including expanding Medicaid and making historic investments in Montana's behavioral health system," said Governor Steve Bullock. "We must continue to implement the best tools we have available to tackle this challenge in order to give Montanans the treatment they need while looking out for the most vulnerable among us."



**About the Montana Healthcare Foundation**

The Montana Healthcare Foundation (MHCF) makes strategic investments to improve the health and well-being of all Montanans. Created in 2013, MHCF has approximately \$150 million in assets making it Montana's largest health-focused private foundation. MHCF contributes to a measurably healthier state by supporting access to quality and affordable health services, conducting evidence-driven research and analysis, and addressing the upstream influences on health and illness. To learn more about the Foundation and its focus areas, please visit [www.mthcf.org](http://www.mthcf.org).

###