



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 24, 2016

Feds Seek “Mental Health” Testing of All Children, Adults

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Next time you visit  your doctor, be careful how you respond to his questions, or you may just be branded “mentally ill” and subjected to “treatment.” That is because a panel advising the Obama administration, in partnership with Big Psychiatry, wants to make doctors subject all American adults and children over age 12 to screening for alleged “mental health” disorders — particularly depression, at least to start with. Then, anyone found to harbor any alleged mental disorder, including children as young as eight, should undergo “therapy,” often including powerful psychotropic medications that experts say have dubious value but often come with [well-documented and highly dangerous side effects](#).

Your ObamaCare plan will be forced to pay for it, whether you want it or not, thanks to the federal government’s commandeering of the health-insurance industry under the so-called Affordable Care Act. And eventually, younger and younger children will be in Big Brother’s crosshairs for mental and behavioral health “services,” whether parents want it or not. School teachers, social workers, and more are all [already being enlisted in the federal government’s search for supposed “mental and behavioral health” issues](#) — a list that is perpetually expanding [as psychiatrists invent new “illnesses.”](#) The outcry against the federal government’s obsession with your mind and the minds of America’s children, though, is growing louder, as critics call the agenda “depressing” and worry whether it is another scheme to disarm more Americans.

The controversial “recommendations” include screening all Americans between the ages of 12 and 18 for depression. A separate but related recommendation seeks to have all U.S. adults checked for “mental illness,” too. And consider that the list of “illnesses” is subjective (homosexuality was a mental disorder a few decades ago) and is constantly expanding as psychiatrists vote to create new ones, literally, as part of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual — the “Bible” of psychiatry that [has been widely criticized, even by leading psychiatrists](#).

The latest demands come from the United States Preventive Services Task Force, or USPSTF. The influential outfit, appointed by the Obama administration’s increasingly radical Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), recommends various unconstitutional federal health policies for Big Brother to decree into pseudo-law via regulation.

Its latest recommendations for children and adolescents 12 and older were [published earlier this month](#) in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. “The USPSTF recommends screening for major depressive disorder (MDD) in adolescents aged 12 to 18 years,” the HHS task force said in the summary of its position. “Screening should be implemented with adequate systems in place to ensure accurate diagnosis,



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effective treatment, and appropriate follow-up.” Why the federal government believes it has any business coming between patients and doctors — or where it believes the constitutional authority for such meddling is found — was not immediately clear.

The outfit also left the door open for recommending such “screening” for children under 12, too. “The USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening for MDD in children aged 11 years and younger,” the Obama HHS panel wrote. The recommendations also call for using controversial medications such as Prozac to drug children between 12 and 17, while advocating powerful psychotropic substances such as Lexapro for children as young as eight.

Already, about one in 10 American school-aged boys has been labeled and drugged under the guise of “Attention Deficit Disorder” (ADD) and “Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder” (ADHD). However, even the late Dr. Leon Eisenberg, often described as the “father” or “inventor” of the diagnosis, said before his death in an interview with German magazine *Der Spiegel* that the alleged disease was “a prime example of a fabricated disorder.” With the list of “disorders” expanding rapidly, and with that list labeling more and more normal behaviors as symptoms of alleged illness, critics have warned that the trend is deeply troubling.

When it comes to adults, the advisory panel, which purports to be independent, wants to cast an even broader net. “The USPSTF recommends screening for depression in the general adult population, including pregnant and postpartum women,” [said](#) the outfit, which adds that its views should not be construed as the official position of the “Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality” or Obama’s HHS. “Screening should be implemented with adequate systems in place to ensure accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and appropriate follow-up.”

In its “rationale” for recommending that all U.S. adults be screened for depression, the panel claims that the “illness” is “common in patients seeking care in the primary care setting.” It also cites “adequate evidence” allegedly showing some “improvements” if its advice is followed.

Then, unsurprisingly, the outfit downplays the [very serious risks](#) documented by *The New American* magazine and many other sources — including government and Big Pharma itself. For instance, the panel admits that antidepressants are “associated” with harms, including an increase in suicidal behavior, an increased risk of gastrointestinal bleeding, fetal harm, and more. But despite that, the task force “concludes with at least moderate certainty that there is a moderate net benefit” to screening all American adults. And by all, the task force means all: “The USPSTF recommends screening in all adults regardless of risk factors,” it said.

Big Pharma and Big Government were no doubt pleased with the conclusion. But not everyone was. Among those expressing concerns was Dr. Ron Paul, the liberty-minded former congressman from Texas and GOP presidential contender, who called the proposed mandatory screenings a “depressing thought” in his [weekly column](#). “Basic economics, as well as the Obamacare disaster, should have shown this task force that government health insurance mandates harm Americans,” wrote Paul, a medical doctor. He warned that, among other problems, the scheme would raise insurance costs. Even more troubling is that it would likely result in new federal databases containing the results of the screenings, which would be used to deny even more Americans their right to keep and bear arms.

“Today, some mental health professionals think that those who believe in limited government, free-market economics, or traditional values suffer from mental disorders,” Paul explained, echoing growing



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concerns among watchdogs monitoring the psychiatric industry. “If mandatory depression screening becomes a reality, it is likely this mental health screening will be expanded to cover screening for other mental illnesses. This could result in anyone with an unpopular political belief or lifestyle choice being labeled as ‘mentally ill.’”

Other commentators also directly suggested that the new demands for more “mental health” screening may be related to Obama’s agenda to infringe on gun rights. “With executive actions aimed at getting guns out of the hands of the mentally ill, the timing of this report’s release is rather curious,” wrote Trey Sanchez with Truth Revolt, a conservative-leaning outlet. “It seems reasonable to assume that mass screenings will produce more diagnoses of depression, even for those patients who showed up a little blue that day. But maybe that’s the point: the more people there are that can be labeled ‘mentally ill’ (indeed a disservice to those suffering from actual mental illnesses), the less gun permits approved.”

It is hardly the first time in recent memory that Obama’s HHS has demanded extreme and anti-constitutional intrusions under the guise of “health.” Indeed, the HHS has become increasingly bold in its demands for totalitarianism. Last year, for example, it unveiled a push to target American adults with vaccine mandates. In collaboration with Big Business and special interests, bureaucrats outlined the [“National Adult Immunization Plan”](#) (NAIP) to track Americans’ vaccination records, wage a massive propaganda campaign to “encourage” more inoculations, and foist more controversial vaccines on adults against their will. Critics noted that the agenda includes eventually imposing vaccines at gunpoint.

More recently, HHS, in partnership with the increasingly radical U.S. Department of Education, unveiled a draft policy statement in which families are [referred to as Big Brother’s “equal partners” in child rearing](#). As if that was not enough, the document called for expanding “home visitation” programs. “Home visits by a nurse, social worker, or early childhood educator during pregnancy and in the first years of life can make a tremendous difference in the lives of many children and their families,” argued Obama’s HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell last year in announcing more “grants” to send government workers to family homes.

The “equal partners” scheme also comes with important “mental health” implications, as the policy statement makes clear. “Ensure constant monitoring and communication regarding children’s social-emotional and behavioral health,” the document demands. “Ensure that children’s social-emotional and behavioral needs are met and that families and staff are connected with relevant community partners, such as early childhood mental health consultants and children’s medical homes.” In the policy statement’s “recommendations” for states — much of which will be imposed through federal bribes — state governments are told to “expand early childhood mental health consultation efforts.”

Of course, there is no constitutional authority for federally mandated “mental health” exams or any other meddling in healthcare or family life. Nor is there authority for a Department of “Health and Human Services” to exist. As HHS and other unconstitutional agencies continue to expand, so does the threat they pose to the liberties, well-being, and prosperity of the American people. It is time for the public to demand that Congress defund and shut down all unconstitutional agencies before the lawlessness and totalitarianism become even more extreme.

Alex Newman is a correspondent for The New American, covering economics, education, politics, and more. Follow him on Twitter [@ALEXNEWMAN_JOU](#). He can be reached at:



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anewman@thenewamerican.com.

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