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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**America is Facing an Epidemic Within a Pandemic**  
**Overdose and Substance Use Is Dangerously Increasing**

**Richmond, VA. January 6, 2021.** Over 20 million people currently struggle with substance use disorder (SUD) in the United States and that number continues to grow. According to the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP), overdoses [increased up to 42% per month](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic, as compared to the same months in 2019 - this means for every 10 suspected overdoses in May 2019, 14 overdoses were reported in May 2020. These statistics reflect the early stages of the pandemic and have most likely increased, if major reform does not take place, our country could see an insurmountable loss.

External triggers such as insecurity in housing, food and reliable transportation have been brought on by the pandemic and are detrimental for people experiencing substance use disorder. The stigma around addiction has prevented those with SUD from accessing the support they need, causing many to relapse and overdose during this pandemic.

“America must make it their mission to protect the vulnerable SUD population during this time,” said General Barry McCaffrey (Ret.), former Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. “When we are facing such a deadly disease, we can’t afford to lose anyone else to a treatable one.” As many American’s eyes are focused on Pandemic news, some people and companies are looking for ways to support individuals with substance use disorder.

Averhealth, a drug testing company, has made its mission to reclaim lives, unite families, and strengthen communities through substance use disorder treatment. As an essential healthcare provider, Averhealth has kept its patient care centers opened in most locations to provide services to clients, which are even more critical in the current high stress environment of the pandemic. CEO and Co-chairman of Averhealth, Jason Herzog said, “We believe we must continue providing care, and we must do so safely – We have given all of our staff in our Patient Care Centers PPE, implemented social distancing practices, and other COVID-19 safety protocol to continue pursuing our mission of recovery for our clients.”

The first step in cutting down overdoses in the United States is awareness and education. General Barry McCaffrey has made it his mission to speak on addiction and the opioid crisis and is available for interviews with the media and affiliations. He has also created [this short video](#) for your use and distribution. Please contact Jacquie Sheehey at [jsheehey@Averhealth.com](mailto:jsheehey@Averhealth.com) to set up an interview.

**About Averhealth**

Since 1995, Averhealth has specialized in providing substance use monitoring services tailored to the unique needs of judicial programs that operate at the holistic intersection of justice-involved and behavioral health. Today, Averhealth serves more than 350,000 clients across 30 states. Every element of the Averhealth solution incorporates evidence-based practices, positioning programs and clients for the best possible outcome. Random selection, daily engagement, robust sample collection, and next business day results combine to help clients develop coping and refusal skills to new-use events. With Averhealth’s agile and easy-to-navigate software and automation tools, it streamlines your daily

workflow and ultimately supports recovery. For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.averhealth.com>.

**About General Barry R. McCaffrey, USA (Ret.)**

General McCaffrey is President of his own consulting firm, [www.mccaffreyassociates.com](http://www.mccaffreyassociates.com) and serves as a national security and terrorism analyst for NBC News. McCaffrey served in the United States Army for 32 years and retired as a four-star General. For five years after leaving the military, General McCaffrey served as the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). He has served on many boards, including Chairman Emeritus of the Addiction Policy Forum Advisory Board and Averhealth's Board.

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