REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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The National Institutes of Health Needs to Improve the Cybersecurity of the *All of Us* Research Program to Protect Participant Data

Why OIG Did This Audit

- The goal of NIH's *All of Us* Research Program is to advance disease prevention and treatment by making personal health information provided by more than 1 million volunteer participants available for research.
- The Data and Research Center (DRC) houses the participant data and is managed by an NIH award recipient. This audit examined whether NIH ensured that the DRC award recipient: (1) adequately limited access to research data, (2) implemented required information security and privacy controls, and (3) remediated information security and privacy weaknesses in accordance with Federal requirements.
- It is crucial for NIH to protect research participants' personal health data from cybersecurity and national security threats.

What OIG Found

The DRC award recipient implemented some cybersecurity controls to protect participant data; however, NIH did not:

- ensure that the DRC award recipient limited the access of authorized data users to program data in accordance with program policies,
- communicate national security concerns associated with maintaining genomic data to the DRC award recipient to enable it to choose the appropriate security and privacy cybersecurity controls for its information systems, and
- ensure that security and privacy weaknesses were remediated within federally required timeframes.

What OIG Recommends

We made five recommendations to NIH to improve its oversight of the *All of Us* Research Program's DRC, including that NIH require the DRC award recipient to implement access controls to limit access to information systems and detailed participant data, and to reevaluate its security categorizations. The full recommendations are in the report.

NIH concurred with all five of our recommendations.