



The State of Public Health In Wyoming

Years of cuts to vital public health programs and agencies on both the federal and state levels have taken their toll and further complicate our efforts to support ongoing disease and injury prevention activities and to ensure we are prepared for an infectious disease outbreak, or other public health emergency. The current Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill, which funds most federal public health programs, contains increased funding levels for many of these programs for the first time in recent years.

- Wyoming spent \$354 per capita on public health programs in 2006, over double the U.S. average.
- In the past year the rate of uninsured population in Wyoming has increased by 15%.
- Wyoming's infant mortality rate decreased from 8.0 deaths per 1,000 live births to 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in the past year.
- In 2006 Wyoming's rate of obesity increased from 20.7 % to 24.2%, increasing the state's rank dramatically from 8th to 23rd in the U.S.

Sources: *America's Health Rankings, 2006 Edition: A Call to Action for People & Their Communities*; *Trust for America's Health The State of Your Health Report, 2006 Edition*; *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts*.

In response to an informal electronic survey sent out to our membership and 53 state affiliates:

A Public Health Worker in Sundance told us "We had a cut in funding that was used for immunizations. When we had to start prioritizing who would get immunizations, it caused problems in the community. When we no longer had the revenue for home health visits, we had to drop a lot of visits which also caused some concern in the community."

An employee at the Wyoming State Health Department reported, "Our MCH Block Grant is expected to be cut in 2007. This money is used to fund public health nursing programs throughout the state to carry out Maternal and Child Health programs. The cut will inevitably limit the ability of local public health offices to perform Maternal and Child Health programs and meet the needs of our clients."

Founded in 1872, APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. www.apha.org.