



The State of Public Health In New Jersey

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.

- New Jersey spent \$231 per capita on public health programs in 2006 and is ranked 9th in the U.S. for per capita public health spending.
- Since 1990, the prevalence of obesity in New Jersey has continued to increase from 9.9% in 1990 to 22.1% in 2006.
- Immunization coverage decreased from 82.7% to 78.2% of children aged 19-35 months between 2005 and 2006.
- Since 1990, the number of uninsured people in New Jersey has increased by 73%.

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 staff member of South Jersey AIDS Alliance, working in Galloway told us *"None of our prevention staff will be able to receive any cost of living rate increase due to cuts to public health funding. We will not be able to hire new employees for critical outreach programs and peer education programs."* In response to a follow up question about how cuts affected outreach and prevention efforts: *"Our outreach numbers have been cut dramatically since the current employees have to take up this task in addition to their current responsibilities of their programs."*

A Public Health Worker described how funding cuts have affected relationships with local organizations: *"We are no longer able to provide additional incentives to community organizations for outreach programs."*

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.