



The State of Public Health In Illinois

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.

- On public health programs, Illinois spent \$190 per capita, the 12th highest rate in 2006.
- The percent of the population without health insurance decreased from 14.0% in 2005 to 14.3% in 2006; this places Illinois below the national average, ranking 27th for percent uninsured.
- Immunization coverage for children increased slightly from 82.7% in 2005 to 83.5% in 2006; currently, Illinois's immunization rate is above average, ranking 15th.
- The prevalence of obesity in Illinois has risen sharply from 22.9% in 2005 to 25.1% in 2006, while the prevalence of smoking has dropped from 22.2% to 19.9% in the same period.

Sources: America's Health Rankings, 2006 Edition: A Call to Action for People & Their Communities; 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 from the Department of Public Health in Springfield, Illinois told us, "Even though our program has four different funding sources, all staff (3.5 staff) are paid out of one federal funding source. If federal finding is cut or eliminated, then the injury and violence prevention program is in jeopardy. The planning and implementation of our programming will be drastically affected. We have hosted strategic planning meetings with other organizations, but our ability to implement the action steps is questionable due to cuts in staff and funding."

Another Public Health Worker from Oak Park, Illinois described, "Youth, chronic disease, and maternal and child health programs have been affected by funding cuts. We cannot increase services."

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.