



The State of Public Health In Pennsylvania

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.

- Pennsylvania is ranked 7th in the U.S. for money spent per capita on public health, spending \$247 in 2005 and 2006, up from \$233 in 2004.
- The percentage of uninsured residents decreased from 11.9% in 2005 to 10.5% in 2006.
- The immunization coverage for children ages 19-35 months also decreased from 85.7% in 2005 to 83.2% in 2006.
- Pennsylvania ranked 30th in the U.S. in prevalence of adult obesity, with 25.3% of adult residents obese; this is over double the rate of 12.5% in 1990.

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 the Pennsylvania Department of Health, working in Harrisburg told us that as a result of funding cuts, ***"vacant field positions for public health have not been filled and vacant field positions for TB representatives have not been filled."*** In response to a follow up question about how cuts affected relationships with the community: ***"Education and awareness activities in regions where field staff are vacant have been greatly reduced – in one district by over one half."***

A professor at the University of Pittsburg responded that budget cuts have led to ***"less progress in the advancement of injury prevention...less collaboration with other organizations...[and] less public service and community-oriented research work."***

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.