

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) & the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Discretionary Public Health Spending

Discretionary spending funds most public health agencies and programs nationwide, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration. This type of spending must go through the annual Congressional appropriations process and the money cannot be allocated without Congressional approval.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

By translating research findings into effective intervention efforts, CDC has been a key source of funding for many of our state and local programs that aim to improve the health of communities. Federal funding through CDC provides the foundation for our state and local public health departments, supporting a trained workforce, laboratory capacity and public health education communications systems. It is notable that more than 70 percent of CDC's budget supports state and local health organizations, agencies and academic institutions.

CDC continues to be faced with unprecedented challenges and responsibilities, ranging from chronic disease prevention, eliminating health disparities, bioterrorism preparedness, to combating the obesity epidemic. CDC funds community programs in injury control; health promotion efforts in schools and workplaces; initiatives to prevent diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stroke; improvements in nutrition and immunization; programs to monitor and combat environmental effects on health; interventions to improve oral health; and public health research.

CDC serves as the command center for our nation's public health defense system against emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. From pandemic flu preparedness and prevention activities to West Nile to smallpox to SARS, CDC is the nations – and the world's – expert resource and response center.

In addition to being key to maintaining a strong public health infrastructure and protecting Americans from public health threats and emergencies, CDC programs play a crucial role in reducing healthcare costs and improving the public's health.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

HRSA, "The Access Agency," is a safety net for medically underserved individuals and families, including the 86.7 million Americans who were uninsured for some or all of 2007-2008 and the 50 million Americans who live in neighborhoods where primary health care services are scarce. Some of the major health care initiatives conducted by HRSA include:

Health Professions programs support the education and training of primary care physicians, nurses, dentists, optometrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, public health personnel, mental and behavioral health professionals, pharmacists, and other allied providers.

Primary Care programs support more than 7,000 community health centers in every state and territory, improving access to preventive and primary care in geographically isolated and economically distressed communities.

Maternal and Child Health Flexible Maternal and Child Health Block Grants, Healthy Start and other programs provide services, including prenatal and postnatal care, newborn screening tests and, immunizations for more than 40 million uninsured and underserved women and children.

HIV/AIDS programs provide assistance to areas most severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic; support comprehensive care, drug assistance and address the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women and minorities.

Family Planning Title X programs provide reproductive health care and other preventive services for more than 5 million low-income women at over 4,500 clinics nationwide.

Rural Health programs improve access to care for the more than 60 million Americans who live in rural areas and help rural hospitals and clinics implement new technologies and strategies.

Investment in the Public Health System Saves Lives and Money

Maintaining investments in public health is critical to improving and protecting the health of all Americans. It is imperative that Congress provide the highest possible funding level for CDC and HRSA to support and strengthen the public health system so that it is able to respond to everyday health threats, in addition to unexpected public health emergencies, and ensure that all individuals have access to the health care and preventative health services they need.

