

Prevention and Public Health Fund

Dedicated to improving our nation's public health

The Prevention and Public Health Fund was created as a part of the Affordable Care Act. The Fund is the nation's first mandatory funding stream dedicated to improving our nation's public health

What is the Prevention and Public Health Fund?

Currently, nearly all public health and prevention programs are primarily funded through discretionary appropriations, meaning that Congress determines the amount of money the programs receive each fiscal year. This unpredictable type of funding leaves programs susceptible to significant budget changes year to year. For example, funding for rural health programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) decreased by more than \$10 million from Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 to FY 2009, but then increased by nearly \$10 million in FY2010. These types of fluctuations in funding streams make it difficult to maintain and enhance public health programs.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) addressed this issue by creating the Prevention and Public Health Fund, the nation's first mandatory funding stream dedicated to public health programs. By law, the Fund must be used "to

provide for expanded and sustained national investment in prevention and public health programs to improve health and help restrain the rate of growth in private and public health care costs." It is anticipated the Fund will be used for programs at the local, state, and federal level to fight obesity, curb tobacco use, increase access to preventive care services, as well as to help state and local government respond to public health threats and outbreaks. The Fund will also provide grants to local communities to develop prevention and wellness services through the Community Transformation Grant program. This program will allow communities across the country to enhance their efforts to prevent disease and improve public health. In 2010, the Fund provided resources to state health agencies to improve public health infrastructure. The Fund is not intended to supplant existing activities at our federal public health agencies.

How much money is in the Prevention and Public Health Fund?

The ACA stipulates that \$15 billion are available through the Fund between FY2010 and FY2019, and \$2 billion every year thereafter. During the first five years of the Fund's existence, the yearly amounts gradually increase to \$2 billion per year:

- \$500 million in FY2010, \$750 million in FY2011, \$1 billion in FY2012, \$1.25 billion in FY2013, \$1.5 billion in FY2014, and \$2 billion in FY2015 and each fiscal year after.

In comparison, the CDC's budget in FY2010 for core programs was \$6.46 billion. The Prevention Fund therefore represents a substantial increase in funding for public health, assuming that the Fund does not supplant existing discretionary spending.

Who decides how the Fund is Allocated?

- While the amount available to be spent every year is set in statute, the exact uses of the Fund will be decided yearly through the Congressional appropriations process, in coordination with the White House.
- In years when Congress does not pass a budget, the administration has the authority to direct allocations from the Fund. This occurred in the FY2010, since the ACA passed too late for the Fund to be included in the FY10 budget process. It has also occurred in FY2011, since as of February 2011, Congress has not yet passed an FY2011 budget.

Can the Fund be used for non-public health purposes or eliminated?

- Congress has the ability to eliminate the Fund, or redirect money from it to pay for non-public health legislative proposals. However, such action would require new legislation to be passed into law that amends the ACA.

Where the Money is Going in FY2011

The Department of Health and Human Services announced the allocations for the 2011 Prevention and Public Health Fund in February 2011. The \$750 million available for FY2011 will be used for a variety of public health efforts, including supporting the work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):

- **Community Prevention (\$222 million):** Funds will be used to enhance community-based preventive health programs at the local level through Community Transformation Grants including tobacco cessation, obesity prevention, and disease-specific efforts.
- **Clinical Prevention (\$182 million):** Funds will be used to expand awareness of clinical preventive services and benefits.
- **Public Health Infrastructure and Training (\$137 million):** Funds will be used to bolster public health infrastructure at the state and local level, increase training capacity for the health care workforce, and expand public health officials' ability to prevent and respond to infectious disease outbreaks.
- **Research and Tracking (\$133 million):** Funds will be used to increase and expand data collection on public health services nationwide.

A more detailed table of the distribution of the FY 2011 funds is available on the APHA advocacy website:

<http://www.apha.org/NR/rdonlyres/7B6A6E22-1E7A-4DF3-9F3E-DDC8F2FAB706/0/FY2011PreventionFund-DetailedTable.pdf>

State by state information on the allocation of the Prevention and Public Health Fund can be found here:

<http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/prevention02092011a.html>

