



The State of Public Health In Connecticut

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.

- Connecticut spent \$173 per capita on public health programs in 2006. Public health spending in Connecticut is above the national average, ranking 18th in 2005.
- The percent of the population lacking health insurance decreased from 11.6% in 2005 to 11.3 in 2006; however, the percentage of uninsured has increased by 77% overall since 1990.
- Since 2004, when Connecticut had the highest immunization coverage for children in the nation, the percentage of children between the ages of 19 and 35 months who have received complete immunization has fallen steadily from to only 86.1% in 2006.
- The rate of obesity in Connecticut is third lowest nationally, but has almost doubled since 1990.
- Although the number of cases of infectious disease has been shrinking, Connecticut's overall ranking (5th) was hurt by a relatively high rate of disease infection when compared to other states.

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 county Public Health Worker from the Manchester Health Department described that as a result of funding cuts, ***"Preventative Block Grant funding used to develop and coordinate a highly successful obesity initiative will not be refunded in 2007."***

Another Public Health Worker told us: ***"Additional cuts may cause us to continue to reduce the number of clients served even though the need exceeds current funding levels. Additionally, I anticipate having to reduce at least one or two positions hours to part-time. As the under and uninsured continue to grow, services are being reduced. The disparity between the insured and under/uninsured continues to grow. More funds need to be placed toward preventative health care not less."***

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.