



The State of Public Health In Oklahoma

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.

- Oklahoma spent \$131 per capita on public health programs in 2006.
- Since 1990, the rate of uninsured people in Oklahoma has stayed alarmingly high, at 18.4%.
- Oklahoma has the highest rate of cardiovascular deaths at 416.1 deaths per 100,000 residents. The national average is 332.9 deaths per 100,000.
- Oklahoma has a high rate of obesity ranking 38th in the U.S., 26.8% of adult residents were clinically obese in 2006.
- In the past year, the rate of children in poverty has increased by 48% from 14.1% to 20.8%.

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:

In response to a question about how cuts have affected the programs offered by her organization, an employee from the Oklahoma State Department of Health told us, *"[we] had to reduce staff and clinical services to the population in need...including cutting diagnostic procedures for women not qualifying for breast and cervical cancer services."*

Another employee at the Oklahoma State Department of Health responded that, *"cuts in federal funds for newborn screening activities are leading to a shift to maintain these services, which is impacting funds available for direct health 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.