



The State of Public Health In Arizona

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.

- Arizona spent only \$81 per capita on public health programs in 2006; public health spending in Arizona is one of the lowest in the country, ranking 44th for two years straight.
- 20.2% of people living in Arizona were uninsured in 2006, making it the third-lowest insured state in the nation; this rank has dropped severely since 2005 when it was 40th.
- The prevalence of smoking in Arizona increased from 18.5% in 2005 to 20.2% in 2006, a significant increase; the rate of obesity Arizona is ranked 13th, which is better than the national average.

Sources: *America's Health Rankings, 2005 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 from Phoenix, Arizona told us that, *"Reduced Preventative Health Block grants means fewer chronic disease prevention services provided; WIC program funding has not been able to keep up with expenses."*

A Public Health Worker from Yuma, Arizona described the effect on services her organization provides: *"Low income women over 50 in the community won't be able to get well woman exams."*

Another Public Health Worker from Glendale, Arizona noted the impact on her organization and the community: *"[As a result of budget cuts, there are] less funds and support for community outreach. [Other organizations] seem more hesitant to work with u, or provide letters of support..."* She concluded by noting: *"Funding helps collaborative efforts!"*

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.