



American
Public Health
Association



APHA PHACT Campaign

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION CAMPAIGN



The State of Public Health in Connecticut

Years of flat funding and budget cuts to vital public health agencies and programs at both the federal and state levels have taken their toll on Connecticut and the nation as a whole, complicating public health efforts. Additional resources are needed to adequately support improving access to care, controlling diseases, eliminating health disparities, and other public health activities. Make public health a priority this year and help us move towards developing a healthy society.

The Facts:

- **Public Health Funding:** The state of Connecticut spends an average of \$22.78 a year on the public health needs of each resident, which is well below the national median of \$33.26. Total public health spending in Connecticut, including federal sources such as money from HRSA and CDC, amounts to an average of \$173 per person, the 18th highest level in the nation.
- **Chronic Disease:** Funding shortages mean that Connecticut continues to face significant health challenges. The state has the 2nd highest rate of asthma among adolescents (27.3 percent) and a high rate of infectious disease (25.2 cases per 100,000 people).
- **Health Disparities:** African Americans experience over 50 percent more premature death than whites. Residents in rural areas are 28 percent more likely to die prematurely than residents in urban areas.
- **The Positives:** Connecticut has the fourth lowest percentage of smokers (17.2 percent of the population) and the 3rd lowest level of obesity (20.6 percent of the population). Connecticut also has the sixth lowest rate of uninsured residents in the nation (9.4 percent of the population).
- **The Road Ahead:** Even with recent improvements in public health, Connecticut still faces significant public health challenges.

Sources: *United Health Foundation's State Snapshots; Trust for America's Health The State of Your Health Report, 2008 Edition.*

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.