THE FACTS: Alabama

Public Health Funding: Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. Alabama receives $22.14 per person in funding from CDC (29th in the nation) and $33.15 per person from HRSA (16th in the nation). The Prevention and Public Health Fund has awarded over $52.3 million in grants to Alabama since 2010 for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure.

Access to Care: 9.1 percent of people in Alabama do not have health insurance coverage compared to the national uninsured rate of 8.6 percent. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. Alabama has 119.3 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 149.7 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

Notable Health Measures
- Diabetes: 14.6 percent of adults have diabetes, ranking the state 2nd highest in the nation.
- Infant mortality: 8.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, ranking the state 2nd highest in the nation.
- High school graduation: 89.3 percent of students graduate from high school, ranking the state 3rd highest in the nation. People with higher levels of education are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors.

The Challenges Ahead
- Tobacco use: 21.5 percent of the adult population smokes cigarettes, ranking Alabama 9th highest in the nation. Smoking-related illnesses have been attributed to 8,600 deaths each year in Alabama and an estimated $5.6 billion annually in total economic impact.
- Obesity: Obesity contributes to poor general health and is a leading factor in preventable diseases. The obesity rate has steadily increased over the past two and a half decades, ranking Alabama the 4th highest in the nation with 35.7 percent of the adult population obese and significant disparities existing between blacks (44.0 percent) and non-Hispanic whites (33.5 percent). Each year, an estimated $190.2 billion is spent on obesity-related health issues in the U.S., accounting for 21 percent of annual medical spending.

Sources: Trust for America’s Health, Investing in America’s Health; Trust for America’s Health, Prevention and Public Health Fund at Work in States; U.S. Census Bureau, 2015, 2016, and 2017 1-Year American Community Surveys; United Health Foundation, America’s Health Rankings; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Tobacco Control Program Funding.

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