PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING  Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. New Jersey receives $66 total per person from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) for public health funding. The Prevention and Public Health Fund awarded the state $14.63 million in grants for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure in fiscal year 2018.

ACCESS TO CARE  7.6 percent of people in New Jersey do not have health insurance coverage compared with the national uninsured rate of 8.8 percent. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. New Jersey has 181.0 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 159.6 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

Notable Health Measures

• Tobacco use  13.1 percent of adults in New Jersey regularly smoke cigarettes, ranking 7th lowest in the nation. Yet, each year, 11,780 people die from smoking-related illnesses in New Jersey and $4.1 billion is spent on health care costs due to smoking.

• High school graduation  90.5 percent of students graduate from high school in New Jersey, ranking the state 2nd highest in the nation. This is a notable measure as there is a strong connection between education and health. People with higher levels of education are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors.

• Infant mortality  New Jersey has the 6th lowest infant mortality rate in the nation with 4.3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

The Challenges Ahead

• Drug deaths  Deaths due to drug injury in New Jersey have increased by 74.0 percent in the past four years, from 13.1 drug deaths per 100,000 people in 2015 to 22.8 drug deaths per 100,000 people in 2019.

• Air pollution  New Jersey is ranked 13th highest in the nation in terms of air pollution with an estimated 8.1 micrograms of fine particles per cubic meter. Poor air quality can have severe health effects and impact a large number of people, particularly impacting young children and older adults.

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.