

**Investing in public health empowers the state to improve health and wellbeing for all Oklahomans.** OK spends \$222 per person to public health, which is better than the US average of \$183 per person, but **more funding can do more good.**<sup>1</sup> Investing in public health **saves money in the long term.**

- Every \$1 invested yields improved health outcomes equal to as much as \$88 saved by county public health departments.<sup>2</sup>
- For every \$1 spent on childhood vaccinations, our country saves \$10.90.<sup>3</sup>

## Challenges that highlight OK's need to invest in public health

**Insurance coverage.** Oklahoma's uninsurance rate is the 2nd worst in the country – 11.7% compared to the national average of 8%. Uninsurance did improve from 14.3% to 11.7% between 2019 and 2022, but more effort is needed to close the covered gap that worsened by the 2023 Medicaid (SoonerCare) unwinding.<sup>1</sup>



**Rural primary care provider shortage.** Primary care provider coverage is an important indicator of access to healthcare. Only 2 of Oklahoma's 77 counties have the recommended number of primary care providers, highlighting provider shortages in rural areas across the state.<sup>4</sup>

**Asthma.** Increased by 28% from 9.6% to 12.3% of adults between 2017 and 2022.<sup>1</sup>

**Fruit & vegetable consumption.** Only 3.8% of adults report eating 2+ fruits and 3+ vegetables daily - another 2nd lowest rate in the country.<sup>1</sup>

**ACEs.** 18.3% of Oklahoma's children ages 0-17 have had two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The national average is 14%.<sup>1</sup>

**Youth tobacco use.** In 2021, 22.1% of Oklahoma high schoolers reported using any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes. Each year, 7,500 people die from smoking-related illnesses in Oklahoma and \$1.6 billion is spent on health care costs due to smoking.<sup>5</sup>

**Premature death.** Increased 17% from 10,873 to 12,764 years lost before age 75 per 100,000 population between 2020 and 2021.<sup>1</sup>

Sources: America's Health Rankings analysis of Trust for America's Health, U.S. HHS, Accessed 2024; Muller C. Fact Sheet: How Investing in Public Health Will Strengthen America's Health. Center for American Progress. Published 2022.; Vaccines Are Cost Saving. Vaccinate Your Family. Published 2020.; Map of Health Professional Shortage Areas: Primary Care, by County, 2024 - Rural Health Information Hub. Ruralhealthinfo.org. Published 2024.; National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) State Fact Sheets. Published 2023. U.S. HHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Questions? Email [oklahomapublichealth@gmail.com](mailto:oklahomapublichealth@gmail.com).