



## Local Health Departments Prevent Costly Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, lung disease, and heart disease are the leading cause of death and disability in the United States. Much of what keeps people healthy happens outside of the doctor's office, in the places where people live, work, play, learn, and worship. Local health departments lay the groundwork for people to lead healthier and longer lives by encouraging healthy choices that prevent disease, promote resilient families, and strengthen the U.S. workforce.

Local health departments work with a wide range of multi-sector community partners to create conditions and policies that help people make healthy choices. For example, local health departments help people avoid tobacco use, become more physically active, and access healthier food. They help identify people with chronic diseases and connect them to appropriate services. These proactive measures contribute to the prevention of chronic diseases, saving money in the healthcare system and increasing productivity.

The President's FY20 budget, as in previous budgets, proposed to eliminate the current mechanism through which chronic disease programs are funded at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The proposal would merge funding for CDC chronic disease programs, such as heart disease and stroke prevention, diabetes prevention, and tobacco prevention and control, into the America's Health Block Grant. Cutting and merging funding for the chronic disease programs would harm local health departments' ability to effectively address chronic disease issues in their communities by squeezing state budgets and weakening transparency and accountability with federal agencies. NACCHO supports maintaining the existing funding mechanism and providing state and local health departments with sustained resources to adequately address the nation's leading causes of death and disability.

### NACCHO Recommendations

To promote healthy living and prevent disease, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recommends the following in fiscal year (FY) 2020:

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The President's FY20 Budget proposes consolidating the following programs in the America's Health Block Grant:

#### TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL

FY19: \$210 million

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$310 million

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States. The National Tobacco Control Program provides funding and technical support to state health departments, tribes, and national networks. The program's primary goals are to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure, promote quitting tobacco use, prevent initiation, and eliminate disparities. Local health departments collaborate with national, state, and local partners to reduce tobacco use among adults and youth in their communities.

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## RACIAL AND ETHNIC APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY HEALTH (REACH)

FY18: \$56 million (including \$21 million for tribal communities)

President's FY20 Budget: Eliminated

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$77 million (including \$21 million for tribal communities)

The REACH program is aimed at reducing racial and ethnic inequities in health status. REACH funds state and local health departments, tribes, universities, and community-based organizations. REACH uses community-based, participatory approaches to identify, develop, and disseminate effective strategies for addressing health disparities across a wide range of priority areas such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and immunization. In many REACH communities, local health departments serve as central coordinating organizations because of their success in community-based public health outreach.

Local health departments and their partners play a critical role in population-based tobacco prevention and cessation efforts. According to the 2016 National Profile of Local Health Departments 74% of local health departments provide population-based primary prevention services for tobacco and 38% of local health departments regulate, inspect, or license tobacco retailers in their communities.

With CDC support, NACCHO provided subgrants to local health departments to partner with health care providers on tobacco cessation through the CDC's Tips From Former Smokers® Campaign.

Subgrantees included the following:

- East Central District Health Department, NE;
- Franklin County Health Department, KY;
- Huron County Public Health, OH;
- Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, KS;
- Macon-Bibb County Health Department, GA;
- Tazewell County Health Department, IL; and
- Utah County Government on behalf of Utah County Health Department, UT.

Tobacco prevention and control is one of the “best buys” in public health. States with strong tobacco control programs see a \$55 return on every \$1 investment, mostly from avoiding costs to treat smoking-related illness. (Source: CDC)



### About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials is the voice of nearly 3,000 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to ensure the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

**Eli Briggs**  
Senior Director, Government Affairs  
202.507.4194  
ebriggs@naccho.org

**NACCHO**

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments.

1201 Eye Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202-783-5550 • Fax: 202-783-1583

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