Overview

Prevention is one of the core pillars of public health and is key to healthier lives and improved quality of life. Clinical preventive services and interventions have been instrumental in everything from lowering rates of illness and disease to helping reduce the overall burden on the health care system.

The 2016 America’s Health Rankings® Spotlight: Prevention took an in-depth look at preventive measures across all 50 states through the lenses of health care access, immunizations and chronic disease prevention.

The full report is available at www.americashealthrankings.org/spotlight/prevention

THE REPORT FOCUSES ON FOUR KEY FINDINGS:

FINDING #1
Income, education, geography, racial and ethnic inequities exist in use of preventive care.

FINDING #2
Health care access is critical to overall prevention.

FINDING #3
Taking a holistic view of prevention is key.

FINDING #4
Immunization rates vary among states and lag behind U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2020 targets.
The Prevention Model

For the purposes of this report, prevention has been examined through the lenses of access to health care, immunizations and chronic disease prevention, with each category composed of multiple measures.

While not an exhaustive list of clinical preventive care, each category represents a unique perspective on the way individuals interact with the health care system to prevent, diagnose and manage infectious and chronic diseases.
FINDING #1

Income, education, geography, racial and ethnic inequities exist in use of preventive care.

Almost all prevention measures analyzed in this report vary by income, education, geography, race and ethnicity. Specifically, the report finds a lower percentage of Hispanics access clinical preventive services than non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic blacks.
FINDING #2

Health care access is critical to overall prevention.

States that perform well on access to health care metrics tend to perform well across a wide range of preventive health metrics. For example, states like Massachusetts, where a higher percentage of residents report having a dedicated health care provider, tend to have higher rates of preventive screening.
FINDING #3

Taking a holistic view of prevention is key.

States that perform well in one category of prevention generally perform well across the other two categories in the model, suggesting the importance of taking a holistic view of prevention activities. New England states tend to excel in prevention activities across all three categories and may serve as a potential source for best practices.
FINDING #4

Immunization rates vary among states and lag behind U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2020 (HP 2020) targets.

For example, childhood immunizations rates range from 84.7% in Maine to 63.4% in West Virginia, while adult influenza immunization rates range from 50.2% in South Dakota to 31.7% in Florida. Meanwhile, national immunization rates for children, adults and seniors all lag behind HP 2020 targets.
Read the full Spotlight: Prevention at
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JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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