

**Public health funding:** Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. South Carolina receives \$22.62 per person in funding from CDC (23rd in the nation) and \$29.76 per person from HRSA (23rd in the nation). The Prevention and Public Health Fund has awarded over \$65 million in grants to South Carolina since 2010 for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure.

**Access to care:** 10.9 percent of people in South Carolina do not have health insurance coverage, which is above the national uninsured rate of 9.4 percent. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. South Carolina has 124.3 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 145.3 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

### Notable health measures

- **Excessive drinking:** The state has a relatively low excessive drinking rate with 16.6 percent of adults reporting drinking excessively. Excessive alcohol use can lead to fetal damage, liver diseases, high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases and other major health problems.
- **Preventable hospitalizations:** The state has a low rate of preventable hospitalization with 46.2 discharges for ambulatory care-sensitive conditions per 1,000 Medicare enrollees.

### The challenges ahead

- **High school graduation:** 80.3 of students graduate from high school in South Carolina. This is of public health concern as there is a strong connection between education and health. People with higher levels of education are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors.
- **Infectious diseases:** South Carolina has the 2nd highest rate of infectious diseases in the nation measured by incidence rates of chlamydia, pertussis and Salmonella.
- **Low birthweight and infant mortality:** 9.4 percent of live births in South Carolina are low birthweight, ranking 5th highest in the nation. Low birthweight is associated with short- and long-term complications and an increased risk of infant mortality. In the past 10 years, infant mortality decreased 23 percent from 8.7 to 6.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. However, while having made significant progress to reduce infant mortality, the rate is higher than the national rate and remains consistently higher than that of other developed countries.
- **Tobacco use:** In the past year, smoking decreased 8 percent from 21.5 percent to 19.7 percent of adults, yet remains above the national rate. Each year, 7,200 people die from smoking-related illnesses in South Carolina and \$1.9 billion is spent on health care costs due to smoking.

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, 2013, 2014, and 2015 1-Year American Community Surveys; United Health Foundation, America's Health Rankings; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Tobacco Control Program Funding.