

# PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

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## Background

Since 1981, the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHS BG) has granted states the autonomy and flexibility to tailor prevention and health promotion programs to their individual public health needs and address unique challenges in innovative ways. Funding all 50 states, the District of Columbia, two American Indian Tribes, five US territories, and three freely associated states, recipients have the freedom to use the funding to advance the national health objectives set by Healthy People 2030 with a focus on emerging needs, implementation, and quality improvement.

States use PHHS BG funds to support areas without federal or state support or where federal categorical funds are insufficient to meet the state's needs. States also use PHHS BG funding to reduce premature deaths, disease, and disabilities by focusing on the leading preventable risk factors in their populace. Many states have also used this funding to address unanticipated public health emergencies such as outbreaks of deadly salmonella infections or West Nile Virus.

States most commonly have used PHHS BG funding to implement heart attack, stroke, and other cardiometabolic disease prevention programs, cancer screenings, oral health programs, public health workforce development programs, and safety and wellness programs for children. Without PHHS BG funding, many states could not continue providing critical chronic disease prevention and health promotion programs to the people who need them most. The PHHS Block Grant supports 683 full-time staff, whose time is distributed across 1,454 discrete positions. Additionally, in FY23, the PHHS BG was the sole source of funding for 34% of the programs it assisted.

## Outcomes

The Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support's (now the Public Health Infrastructure Center) 2022 Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Evaluation Report found that most grant recipients used their funding to advance their ability to provide public health services, address emerging public health needs, and implement evidence-based intervention programs.

- Overall, 47 recipients reported using PHHS BG funds to implement 947 public health interventions. The top four issue areas that these programs, services, or policies addressed were injury and violence prevention, immunization and infectious diseases, tobacco use, and nutrition and weight status.
- Over 58% of recipients used PHHS BG funds to address newly prioritized public health needs and threats.
- Roughly 44% of recipients used funds to support work to meet or maintain performance against national standards in their own health departments, with 20% of recipients using funds to pay the Public Health Accreditation Board.