

TFAH Releases "The Truth about the Prevention Fund"

Washington, DC, June 6, 2013 - Trust for America's Health (TFAH), today, released a new report of key facts about the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which was created by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The Truth about the Prevention Fund includes an overview of the Fund, which is the nation's largest single investment in prevention, using evidence-based and innovative partnership approaches to improve the health of Americans. The Fund provides more than \$14.5 billion in mandatory appropriations over 10 years to improve health and prevent chronic illnesses by expanding preventive care and supporting proven community-based programs that reduce obesity, tobacco use and other preventable conditions.

Currently, more than half of Americans suffer from chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Two thirds of Americans are currently obese or overweight and nearly 20 percent of Americans smoke. Obesity costs the country \$147 billion and tobacco use \$96 billion in direct healthcare costs each year. [A 2012 TFAH study](#)

(http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001R_4Jw2WHKaNgHWwFrR_OAej6TuSbLhYmaBAMgxYtVfa2mf8n34sSjDpM Pd7jrglfdy1puanVQeV2ly8zqYHx6zgf9x5Y6koJKkLfld52AwFV15UvLop1tZ2M4Cr9mf59vF3zIZ-Qxq1s0eoJlxwJA) found that if obesity rates continue on their current trajectory, half of Americans could be obese by 2030, and the rise in obesity-related healthcare costs could reach between \$196 billion and \$213 billion in direct medical costs.

"Today's kids could become the first in American history to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents," said Jeffrey Levi, PhD, executive director of TFAH. "We can resign our kids to that fate - or invest in proven, effective programs to reduce obesity, tobacco use and the prevalence of preventable chronic conditions. The Prevention Fund is the best and most targeted effort the nation has made toward getting the health of this country back on track."

The Prevention Fund invests in programs that are proven and effective. Oversight and evaluation is a key component of every Fund-sponsored program, and strict performance measures ensure accountability before federal dollars are spent. The Fund supports community-driven prevention efforts targeted at reducing tobacco use, increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, expanding mental health and injury prevention programs and improving prevention activities.

For instance, for one component of the Fund - the Community Transformation Grants (CTGs) - grantees are required within five years to reduce by 5 percent death and disability due to tobacco use; the rate of obesity (through nutrition and physical activity approaches); and death and disability due to heart disease and stroke. States and local communities have the flexibility to decide what problems are most pressing for them to address and decide which approaches to use as long as they are evidence based. All grantees are expressly forbidden from using any funds for lobbying. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has initiated extra controls to ensure grantees are restricted from ever using funds on prohibited lobbying activities and has mechanisms in place to identify any violations. No such violations have been confirmed.

"Obesity, tobacco-use and other preventable health problems are crippling this nation. The Prevention Fund provides states and communities with the flexibility to address their most pressing health challenges. We will never be successful unless we invest in programs and approaches we know work," said Levi.

The full report also profiles examples of how communities are effectively using Prevention Fund support - *The Truth about the Prevention Fund* is available on [TFAH's web site](#).

Trust for America's Health is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to saving lives by protecting the health of every community and working to make disease prevention a national priority.

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Examples of CTG Efforts in Communities:

- **West Virginia is supporting local health departments to address top challenges facing their community and develop solutions.** The West Virginia Department of Health is using CTG support to help local health departments in every county in the state implement targeted initiatives including: safe places in communities to work and play, Farm-to-School Initiatives to improve nutrition in school settings, Child and Day Care Center Nutrition Programs to educate and empower children to choose healthy lifestyles through physical activity and healthy food choices, and community coordinated care systems that link and build referral networks between the clinical system and community-based lifestyle programs so people can manage their health.
- **Oklahoma is using a CTG to work with a range of sectors to make healthier choices easier in the state.** Nearly 70 percent of Oklahoma County's premature deaths are largely preventable, arising from an unhealthy lifestyle, poor diet or the use of tobacco, alcohol or other substances. The county spends about \$920 million every year to treat chronic disease. In September 2011, Oklahoma City was awarded a \$3.5 million CTG. Using a portion of those funds, along with additional outside resources, the Oklahoma City-County Health Department (OCCHD) created the "My Heart, My Health, My Family" program to provide prevention programs and services, specifically focused on cardiovascular disease. The program includes lesson plans on healthy living (e.g. portion control and the benefits of substituting water for sugar sweetened beverages) and participants receive access to free regular clinical checkups four times a year and free medication. The CTG money will also support other obesity-specific initiatives, including expanded walking and biking trails, a push to help schools offer healthy menu options and a physical education coordinator for city schools.
- **An Accountable Care Community (ACC) in Akron, Ohio - a CTG recipient - has brought together 70 community partners to coordinate healthcare and support inside and outside the doctor's office for patients with type 2 diabetes.** In just 18 months, the ACC has reduced the average cost per month of care for individuals with type 2 diabetes by more than 10 percent per month with an estimated program savings of \$3,185 per person per year. This initiative also led to a decrease in diabetes-related emergency department visits.
- **The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is providing local communities with resources to better address obesity and other health risk factors.** Utilizing a \$3 million/year CTG, one key element is the Iowa Community Referral Project. The project will help ensure Iowans follow through with healthy lifestyle behaviors as a result of referral system changes between health providers and community agencies. The two components of the project include 1) A partnership with the Iowa Primary Care Association (IPCA) and selected communities where intensive training and technical assistance are provided to promote a seamless referral system, and 2) Implementation of local referral projects in the Iowa CTG intervention counties.
- **A CTG awarded to Broward Regional Health Planning Council's Transforming Our Community's Health (TOUCH) initiative is serving 1.7 million residents of Broward County, Florida to improve health, including by working with a range of partners to alleviate childhood obesity.** TOUCH has brought together community-based organizations, multidisciplinary strategies and diverse communities to address the most recognizable factors contributing to childhood obesity. It is anticipated that these system, environmental and policy enhancements will positively impact the health, well-being and longevity of children. Additional highlights of CTG program efforts in 2011 are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation/accomplishments/index.htm>.