

Behavioral Health Risk Disparity Programs

Tobacco Control Program. The Tobacco Control Program in the Division of Public Health developed a strategic plan to identify and eliminate disparities relating to tobacco in Wisconsin. The program convened a Wisconsin Tobacco Control Disparities Strategic Planning Workgroup composed of individuals and organizations representing groups that experience disparities based on age, gender, education, income, occupation, race/ethnicity, geographic location, and sexual orientation. The workgroup found disparities among low socioeconomic (income, education and occupation) groups, racial/ethnic groups, and 18-to-24-year-olds. As data collection improves, the differentiation within groups can continue to be refined.

Goals developed and recommended by the workgroup are:

- Improve data information on disparately affected populations.
- Broaden partnerships to strengthen Wisconsin tobacco control efforts.
- Increase emphasis on disparities in existing tobacco control programs.
- Advocate for resources to eliminate tobacco-related disparities.
- Build capacity in disparately affected populations.
- Promote effective, population-specific interventions.

Wisconsin Ethnic Network Collaborative. Since 2001, the Wisconsin Ethnic Network Collaborative (WENC) has worked to address tobacco control issues in communities of color throughout Wisconsin. The four member organizations, representing the African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, and Southeast Asian populations, monitor tobacco control policies and programs affecting their communities, facilitate training, and share culturally and linguistically appropriate ideas for tobacco control. Network member agencies include the Black Health Coalition, United Migrant Opportunity Services, the Great Lakes Intertribal Council, and the Wisconsin United Coalition of Mutual Assistance Associations.

Smoking During Pregnancy. In 2006, the First Breath Program, managed by the Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation in partnership with the Division of Public Health, maintained 108 sites in 60 of 72 Wisconsin counties that provided intensive cessation counseling and support to 1,470 pregnant smokers—the majority on public assistance programs. Since the program began in 2001, almost 5,000 pregnant or postpartum women have participated in First Breath. Thirty-five percent of participants self-report not smoking at the last data collection point prior to delivery. The program continues to work to enroll women with the highest rates of smoking during pregnancy: low-income women and women of color. First Breath has become a national model.

- First Breath Program page: <http://www.wwhf.org/fb/index.aspx>
- Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation main page: <http://www.wwhf.org>

Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Poverty Network. The Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Poverty Network has been established in the state to provide the opportunity for social service agencies serving low-socioeconomic populations to collaborate, advocate, identify resources, share information, and support each other's activities in order to eliminate tobacco-related health disparities in vulnerable populations. A request for proposals process was completed and the Salvation Army was awarded the grant to provide support and act as the coordinating agency for the Network.

Wisconsin has made progress in identifying tobacco-related disparities and addressing tobacco use in several priority populations. There are continuing opportunities for improving the health of Wisconsin's most vulnerable populations by addressing these disparities.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Program. The Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity State Plan to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases includes a goal devoted to eliminating disparities among those who are disproportionately affected by obesity and chronic disease. This goal includes working to enhance cultural competence of health care professionals, workforce development, and public health surveillance; and identifying and implementing culturally appropriate and evidenced-based intervention strategies to reduce obesity-related health disparities.

In 2005 the Department released a report that discusses the impact of obesity on children and adults in Wisconsin. The report includes data on the populations disproportionately affected by overweight and obesity, and is available online on the Department's Web site: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/StatePlan/StatePlanBM.pdf>