PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING  Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. Arkansas received $108 per capita in public health funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources Services Administration. This ranks the state 17th in the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the Prevention and Public Health Fund awarded over $4.4 million in funding to the state for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure.

ACCESS TO CARE  8.1% of people in Arkansas do not have health insurance coverage compared to the national uninsured rate of 8.8%. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. Arkansas has 122.3 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people, ranking 8th lowest in the nation. Nationally, there are 159.6 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

Notable Health Measures

- **Violent crime**  After nearly a decade of the violent crime rate decreasing, Arkansas recently experienced a 18.2% increase from 460 offenses per 100,000 people in 2015 to 544 offenses per 100,000 people in 2019. Arkansas now ranks 4th highest in the nation for violent crime. Violent crimes may cause injuries, disability and early death. Additionally, violent crimes may cause long-term stress for families and communities, and interfere with leading a healthy life by discouraging physical activity. However, violent crime can be prevented. Numerous programs and practices have shown that by addressing root causes it is possible to prevent violence.

- **Mental distress**  16% of adults in Arkansas report experiencing frequent mental distress in their daily lives, ranking 4th highest in the nation.

The Challenges Ahead

- **Obesity**  Obesity contributes to poor general health and is a leading factor in preventable diseases. The state obesity rate has steadily increased over the past two and a half decades, ranking Arkansas 3rd in the nation with 37.1% of the adult population obese. Of additional concern, in the past year, 31.0% of adults report being physically inactive – the highest rate in the nation.

- **Tobacco use**  22.7% of adults smoke cigarettes, ranking Arkansas the 3rd highest in the nation. Each year, about 5,800 people die from smoking-related illnesses in Arkansas and $1.2 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, 2015, 2016, and 2017 1-Year American Community Surveys; United Health Foundation, America’s Health Rankings; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Tobacco Control Program Funding.