PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING  Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. Missouri receives $57 per person total from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) in public health funding. The Prevention and Public Health Fund awarded the state $12.01 million in grants for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure in fiscal year 2018.

ACCESS TO CARE  9.3 percent of people in Missouri do not have health insurance coverage compared with the national uninsured rate of 8.8 percent. The number of practicing health care providers is also an important measure of health care availability. Missouri has 171.5 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 159.6 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people. While this is slightly higher than the national rate, Missouri has a low number of practicing dentists—at 49.4 dentists per 100,000 people. This puts the state at the 11th lowest amount for practicing dentists in the country.

Notable Health Measures

• **Obesity**  35.0 percent of adults in Missouri are obese compared to the national average of 30.9 percent. Obesity contributes to poor general health and is a leading factor in preventable diseases.

• **Diabetes**  In the past four years, diabetes rates have increased—climbing from 11.1 percent of the adult population in 2015 to 11.5 percent in 2019.

• **High school graduation**  88.3 percent of students graduate from high school in Missouri, ranking 12th highest in the nation. This is a notable measure as there is a strong connection between education and health. People with higher levels of education are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors.

The Challenges Ahead

• **Tobacco use**  19.4 percent of adults regularly smoke cigarettes in Missouri, ranking the state 10th highest in the nation. Each year, 11,000 people die from smoking-related illnesses in Missouri and $3 billion is spent on health care costs due to smoking.

• **Violent crime**  In 2019, there were 502 offenses per 100,000 people in Missouri, which is the 8th highest rate of violent crime in the nation. 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 lifestyle. However, violent crime can be prevented. Numerous programs and practices have shown that by addressing root causes it is possible to prevent violence.

• **Excessive drinking**  Missouri’s excessive drinking rates have steadily increased in recent years, from 16.1 percent of the adult population excessively drinking in 2015 to 19.2 percent of the population excessively drinking in 2019. Excessive alcohol use can lead to fetal damage, liver diseases, high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases and other major health problems.

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