PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING  Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. North Carolina receives $59 total per person 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 $12.92 million in grants for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure in fiscal year 2018.

ACCESS TO CARE  10.7 percent of people in North Carolina do not have health insurance coverage compared with the national uninsured rate of 8.8 percent. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. North Carolina has 134.4 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 159.6 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

Notable Health Measures

• **Tobacco use**  17.4 percent of adults smoke cigarettes in North Carolina. Each year, 14,200 people die from smoking-related illnesses in North Carolina and $3.8 billion is spent on health care costs due to smoking.

• **Violent crime**  The rate of violent crime in the state has increased 10.5 percent from 342 offenses per 100,000 people in 2015 to 378 offenses per 100,000 people in 2019. The toll of violent crime can be staggering. 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.

The Challenges Ahead

• **Children in poverty**  20.2 percent of children in North Carolina live in a household below the poverty line. This places North Carolina 13th highest in the nation. Poverty has been linked to higher rates of chronic disease and shorter life expectancy.

• **Low birthweight and infant mortality**  9.4 percent of live births in North Carolina are low birthweight, the 8th highest rate in the nation. Low birthweight is associated with short- and long-term complications and an increased risk of infant mortality. Additionally, the state has the 12th highest infant mortality rate with 7.1 deaths per 1,000 live births.

• **Infectious disease**  In the past four years, chlamydia increased 23.2 percent from 496.5 to 612.0 cases per 100,000 people.

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.