PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING  Strong investments in public health allow a state to carry out programs that improve health. South Dakota receives $113 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 $5.70 million in grants for community and clinical prevention efforts and improvements to public health infrastructure in fiscal year 2018.

ACCESS TO CARE  9.5 percent of people in South Dakota do not have health insurance coverage, which is above the national uninsured rate of 8.8 percent. The number of practicing primary care physicians is also an important measure of health care availability. South Dakota has 131.4 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people. Nationally, there are 159.6 practicing primary care physicians per 100,000 people.

Notable Health Measures

• Drug deaths  While drug deaths have increased 31.3 percent from 6.4 to 8.4 deaths per 100,000 people in the past four years, the state boasts the 2nd lowest drug death rate in the nation. The national rate is 13.5 drug deaths per 100,000 people.

• Air pollution  The state is ranked 4th in the country for air quality with an estimated 5.1 micrograms of fine particles per cubic meter. Reduced exposure to air pollution is important to public health as poor air quality leads to reduced lung function, increased risk of asthma complications, heart attacks, heart failure and death, and impacts a large number of people, particularly impacting young children and older adults.

The Challenges Ahead

• Occupational fatalities  The state has the 9th highest rate of occupational fatalities with 6.7 deaths per 100,000 workers.

• Infectious diseases  South Dakota has the 14th highest rate of infectious diseases in the nation, based on the incidence of chlamydia, pertussis and Salmonella.

• Violent crime  In the past four years, violent crime increased 27.8 percent from 317 to 405 offenses per 100,000 people. 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. However, violent crime can be prevented. Numerous programs and practices have shown that by addressing root causes it is possible to prevent violence.

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.