



# 2016 Annual Report

## A Report to the Community

Denver Public Health is an innovative, nationally recognized health department that collaborates with Denver Environmental Health and many other partners to inform, educate, offer services, and promote policy change to **make Denver a healthy community for all people.**

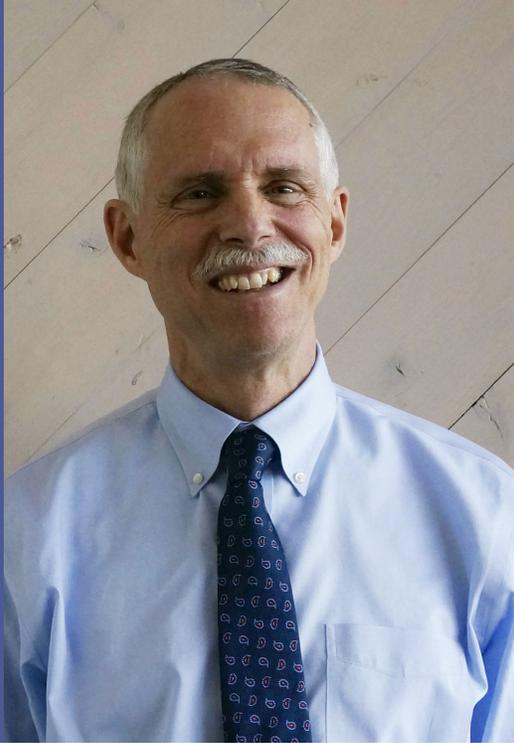
Through our combined programs, Denver residents have access to high quality public health services in clinical and community settings.

**DENVER  
HEALTH**



Denver Public Health

Promotion • Preparedness • Prevention • Protection



Courtesy Stephanie Wolf/Colorado Public Radio

Denver Public Health, a mission-driven health department that is part of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, is focused on improving health with our entire community. As such, this report highlights collaborative activities, not programmatic statistics, to illustrate how we are working with partners throughout the Denver metro area to address issues that impact health.

The wide range of services we offer promote health while also preventing illness and injury. We know that encouraging positive health behaviors while also addressing social and economic barriers to health *today* will lead to improved health, fewer sick days taken and reduced health care costs in the *future*.

Achieving significant change requires an investment in community partnerships. It also demands that we meet people where they are, so we can give them the resources they need (not that we think they need) to overcome the real barriers to achieving optimal health. Together we can do more to reduce health inequities and achieve our vision that Denver is a healthy community for all people.

**Thank you for your partnership in our work,**

**WILLIAM BURMAN, MD  
Executive Director, Denver Public Health**

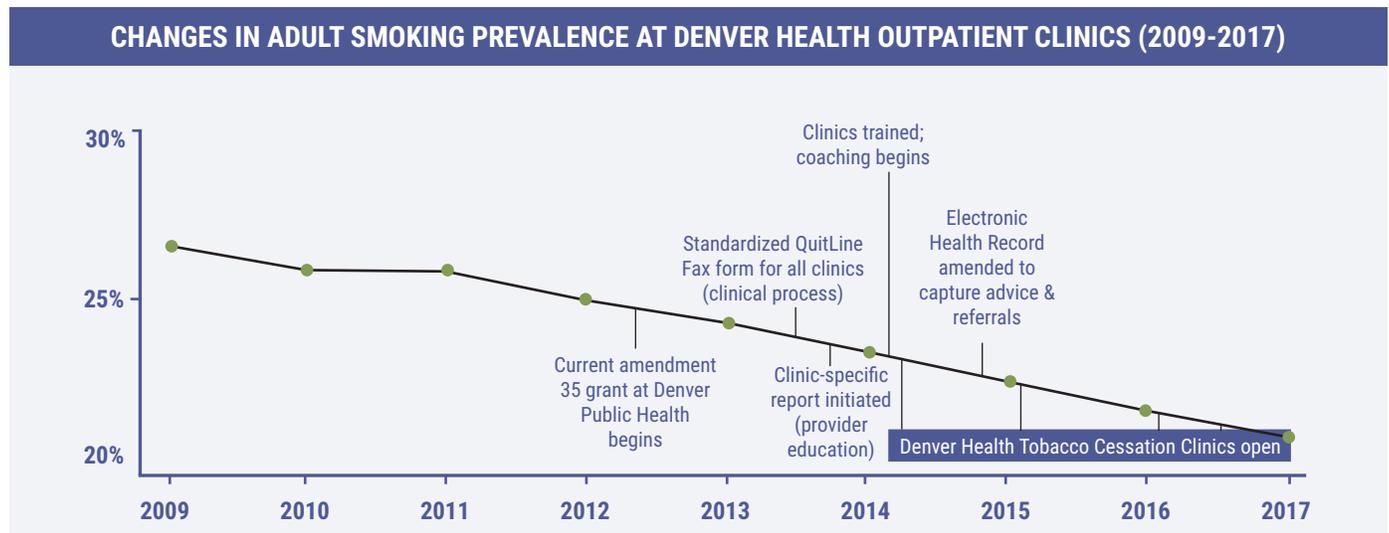
# Aligning to Transform Health

The health of Denver’s diverse community extends beyond the reach of our clinic walls and across county lines. We regularly work with local public health and medical care partners throughout the Denver metro area to address public health from a population-level perspective.

## FOSTERING THE FIRST TOBACCO-FREE GENERATION

Denver Public Health is working to reduce the burden of tobacco use in multiple ways—from providing training and technical assistance, to conducting educational campaigns, to supporting policy changes and clinical interventions.

By aligning clinical and community work, focusing on a simple intervention ([Ask, Advise, Refer](#)), reaching across an entire health care enterprise, and focusing on continuous quality improvement, the percentage of adult Denver Health patients who smoke decreased from 26% to 21% between 2012 and 2016 (and continues to steadily fall).



Source: Denver Health

This remarkable accomplishment is not only improving the health of Denver, but it is also driving down health care costs. And we can replicate and scale it throughout health care systems across the Denver metro area.

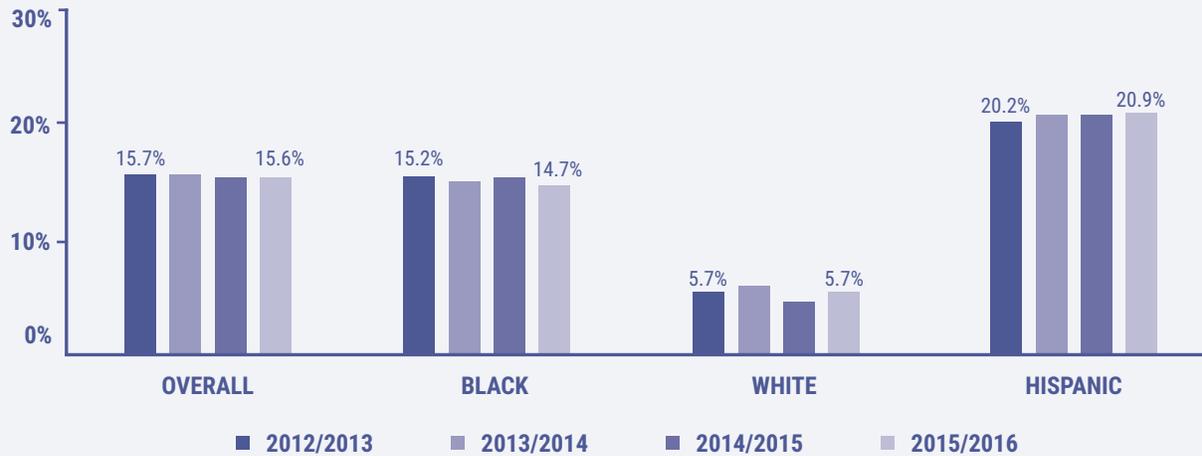
## TURNING THE TIDE ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY

The news frequently reports Denver as a healthy community that is bucking obesity trends, but [local data](#) tells a different story: we import healthy people, we don't grow them.

Denver data shows that childhood obesity remains an issue that deserves our attention.

Between 2012 and 2016, overall childhood obesity in Denver remained stable around 16% (the national average), while obesity rates among Latino children increased from 20% to 21%.

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY AMONG SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN BY RACIAL ETHNIC GROUP



Source: Denver Public Schools Student Height and Weight Screening Data

Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, which can lead to increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, asthma, cancer and heart disease. To turn the tide on childhood obesity, Denver Public Health convenes the Healthy Beverage Partnership, a regional collaboration working to reduce sugar sweetened beverage consumption, the leading cause of obesity among kids.

The Healthy Beverage Partnership is encouraging adoption of healthy vending policies and promoting awareness of the dangers of sugary drinks through the [Hidden-Sugar.org](http://Hidden-Sugar.org) campaign.

## SAME SUGAR. DIFFERENT PACKAGE.

**Soda**  
(20 fl oz)



=



**Fruit Punch**  
(10 fl oz)



=



**Sports Drink**  
(20 fl oz)



=

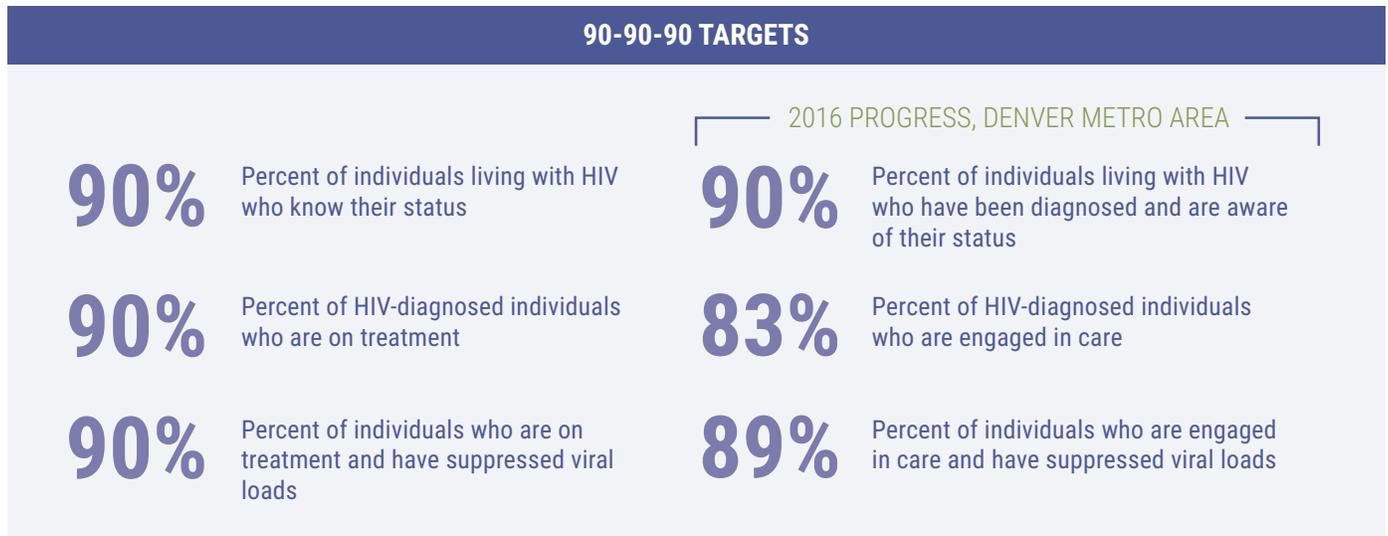


## ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC BY 2030

In August 2015, Denver joined an [international campaign to end the HIV epidemic by 2030](#).

This initiative set aggressive goals for the city to reach by 2020: 90% of people living with HIV know their HIV status; 90% of people who are HIV-positive are on treatment; 90% of people on treatment have suppressed viral loads; and zero discrimination, including stigma.

Citywide and state efforts ensured access to HIV education, testing, linkage, treatment, and prevention services, including an expansion of PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) services at Denver Public Health. In late 2016, Denver Public Health data showed that Denver had achieved two of the three 90-90-90 targets (testing and viral suppression). Since then, our methodology and data systems have improved, yielding more accurate metrics. We now report 83% engagement in care among individuals diagnosed with HIV and 89% viral suppression among individuals in care.



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; Denver Public Health

While work continues to meet all three goals, a priority is helping patients stay in care. Denver Public Health is tackling this by piloting a program at [The Center for Positive Health](#) to re-engage patients not seen in the last year.

It's no longer a dream.

Together we will change the future of HIV/AIDS.



By 2020:

90% know their HIV status

90% receive treatment

90% with viral load suppression



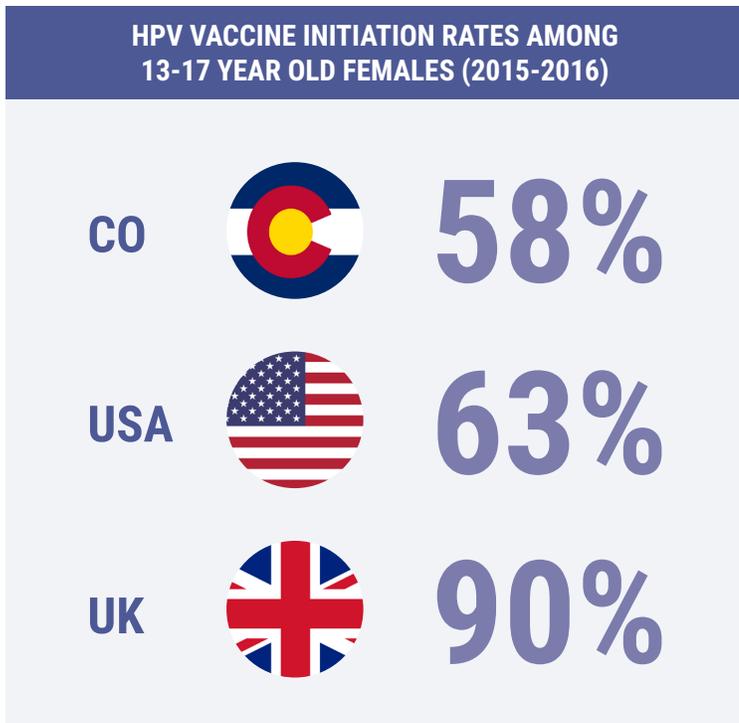
**If there were a vaccine against cancer, wouldn't you get it for your kids?**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
**LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND PARTNERS**

**#HPVFreeCO**

**PREVENTING HPV-RELATED CANCERS THROUGH VACCINATION**

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is cancer prevention, yet just 58% of 13 to 17-year old girls in the Denver metro area have started the HPV vaccine series. This compares poorly against the U.S. and other countries in the world.



To achieve a future in which no Coloradan is diagnosed with an HPV-associated cancer, Denver Public Health organized the Denver Metro Alliance for HPV Prevention (Alliance) which focuses on one goal: increasing HPV vaccine coverage rates among 11 to 17-year-old boys and girls.

The Alliance's work involves educating parents that the HPV vaccine prevents cancer and suggesting they talk with a health care provider about it; encouraging providers to recommend the vaccine; and, monitoring vaccine coverage rates.

Initial survey data from participating providers show a **35% increase in the number of parents asking about HPV vaccine on their own since Alliance work began**—a leading indicator that efforts are leading parents to consider this vaccine for their kids.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (Colorado Immunization Information System) Public Health England*

# Emerging Public Health Issues

The landscape of public health practice and issues affecting the health of our community is constantly changing. Through education and research we integrate best practices into our services. By monitoring health data, we quickly identify and begin working with partners to address emerging public health issues.

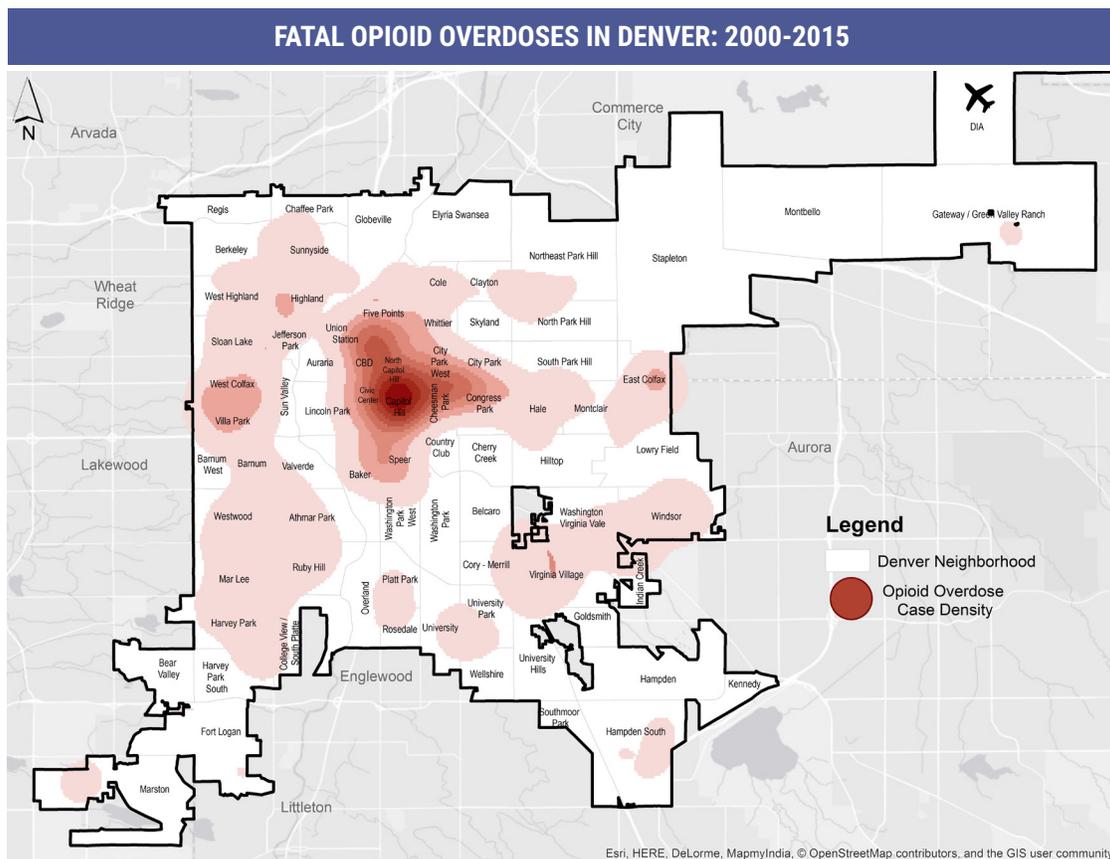


## ADDRESSING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Recent analyses have shown that behavioral health issues are one of the top health burdens in any community. Behavioral health is affected by many social, environmental and biological factors; and, behavioral health issues play an important role in overall health and well-being.

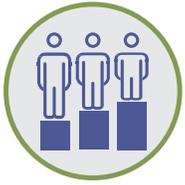
Despite its widespread impact, many people find it difficult to talk about mental problems and addiction. To reduce stigma, Denver Public Health is participating in the [Let's Talk Colorado](#) campaign. By sharing consistent messages that it is OK to talk about mental health, we will take the first step in breaking down barriers to accessing care.

A particularly urgent behavioral health issue facing Denver is increasing rates of opioid use and addiction, and the rapidly rising rates of deaths due to opioid overdoses.



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

To begin to address this challenge, Denver Public Health is organizing governmental agencies, community partners, syringe access providers, and medical providers to align in addressing the epidemic along the entire continuum of care, from prevention to treatment and recovery.



## ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY

In Denver there are more than 10 year differences in life expectancy in neighborhoods separated by just a few miles. Differences are caused by social and economic barriers to health, including income, education, housing, transportation, access to healthy foods, and other factors.



It takes time and collective effort to eliminate inequities and achieve health equity.

Health equity exists when all people—regardless of who they are or where they live—have the opportunity to live healthy lives.

We are educating all Denver Public Health staff about health equity and we are building partnerships to increase our ability to address social and economic barriers to health. Together with our community partners, we will ensure the opportunity for health will not be predicted by zip code, income, race, or any other social factor.



## FUNDING PORTFOLIO

Denver Public Health, a department of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, is funded by grants and contracts.

**In 2016, we provided \$3,000,000 in funding to 63 organizations.**

