



Effectiveness of Investing in Prevention

Health reform isn't just about cutting costs -- it's about keeping Americans safer and healthier. Investing in prevention gives all Americans the opportunity to lead healthier lives and ensures our workforce is strong and healthy enough to compete with the rest of the world. The Public Health Investment Fund and National Prevention and Wellness Strategy would lower disease rates, decrease injuries and disabilities, improve quality of life, and help reduce health care costs for millions of Americans.

For too long, health care has focused on treating people after they've become sick or injured, instead of keeping them well in the first place.

We'll never reduce health care costs until we improve the health and safety of Americans. Right now, 75 percent of all health care costs are spent on the treatment of chronic diseases, many of which could have been prevented.

The National Prevention and Wellness Strategy included in the House & Senate bills would allow us to set clear, achievable goals for improving the health and safety of Americans.

Strategic investments in evidence-based prevention programs in communities can result in a big payoff in a short time -- reducing health care costs, increasing the productivity of the nation's workforce, and helping people lead healthier lives.

The Public Health Investment Fund included in the House and Senate bills would strategically support prevention, public health, the health workforce, and research that would directly improve the health of Americans while reducing health care costs.

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Studies have shown the effectiveness of prevention.

- For example, a study by Trust for America's Health, entitled *Prevention for a Healthier America*, found that investing \$10 per person per year in proven community-based programs to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use, could save the country more than \$16

billion annually within five years. Out of the \$16 billion in savings, Medicare could save \$5 billion+; Medicaid, \$1.9 billion+; and private payers, \$9 billion+ annually.

- Similarly, several large research studies, including the U.S. Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), have found that over HALF of new cases of type 2 diabetes can be avoided by structured lifestyle intervention programs that help individuals with PRE-diabetes to lose just 11 – 15 pounds and to participate in daily physical activity such as brisk walking.
- Multiple prediction models have now demonstrated that a structured lifestyle intervention at the YMCA to prevent diabetes can be COST SAVING within 2 to 3 years time if the direct costs of the intervention can be reduced to \$250 - \$300 per year.
- A recent report by the Urban Institute identifies less expensive and targeted prevention interventions with demonstrated effectiveness. Based on first year referral and program costs of \$300 per enrollee and follow-up program costs of \$150 per enrollee per year for YMCA's DPP, Urban estimates that total savings over 10 years would be \$191 billion, with \$142.9 billion of that total reflecting savings to Medicare/Medicaid.¹
- For every \$1.00 spent on an individual vaccine: Diphtheria-Tetanus-acellular Pertussis (DTaP) saves \$27.00; Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) saves \$26.00; Perinatal Hepatitis B saves \$14.70; Varicella saves \$5.40; and Inactivated Polio (IPV) saves \$5.45.²

¹ Urban Institute. How We Can Pay for Health Care Reform. July 2009.
http://urban.org/uploadedpdf/411932_howwecanpay.pdf

² CDC Budget Justification FY 2010. <http://www.317coalition.org/learnmore/>