



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH PRESS RELEASE

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Maryland shows significant progress in reducing infant mortality, obesity, tobacco use and other high-priority health measures

Baltimore, MD (February 5, 2015) – The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has released a report showing significant improvement on several priority health measures as part of its ongoing State Health Improvement Process (SHIP).

Of the 41 SHIP measures, 28 either met the target goal for 2014 or showed significant improvement toward the goal. Improvement goals were surpassed for infant mortality, which declined by 13 percent in the four-year measurement period, and child and adolescent obesity, which declined by 6 percent. Goals for reducing tobacco use also were surpassed, with adults having an 18 percent decrease in use and youths having a 32 percent decrease in use in three years.

“It is heartening to see Maryland’s progress on key health measures,” said DHMH Secretary Van T. Mitchell. “The healthier we are, the better our collective quality of life and the more valuable our contributions to society can be.”

The 2014 target goals also were surpassed for teen birth rates, healthy weight in adults, alcohol-related vehicle fatalities, HIV infections, domestic violence, children receiving dental care, adolescent wellness checkups, and deaths from heart disease and cancer. These improvements contributed to Maryland making the largest jump among all states in the United Health Foundation’s [America’s Health Rankings](#) released last year. The annual rankings compare states on many of the same health measures used in SHIP.

As part of SHIP, Local Health Improvement Coalitions – which cover all Maryland counties – use these measures to establish priorities for health improvement, to develop strategies and to track progress. These coalitions include hospitals, local health departments, primary care

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providers and other health professionals, as well as community-based organizations, schools, faith-based organizations and other community groups.

The report is available at <http://goo.gl/dkbebq>. The Office of Population Health Improvement at DHMH, which administers SHIP, will release target goals for 2017 in the coming weeks.

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The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is the state government agency that protects Maryland's public health and also works to help Marylanders make better health decisions for better health outcomes. Stay connected: www.twitter.com/MarylandDHMH and www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH.