



# **The Affordable Care Act: What It Means to Public Health**

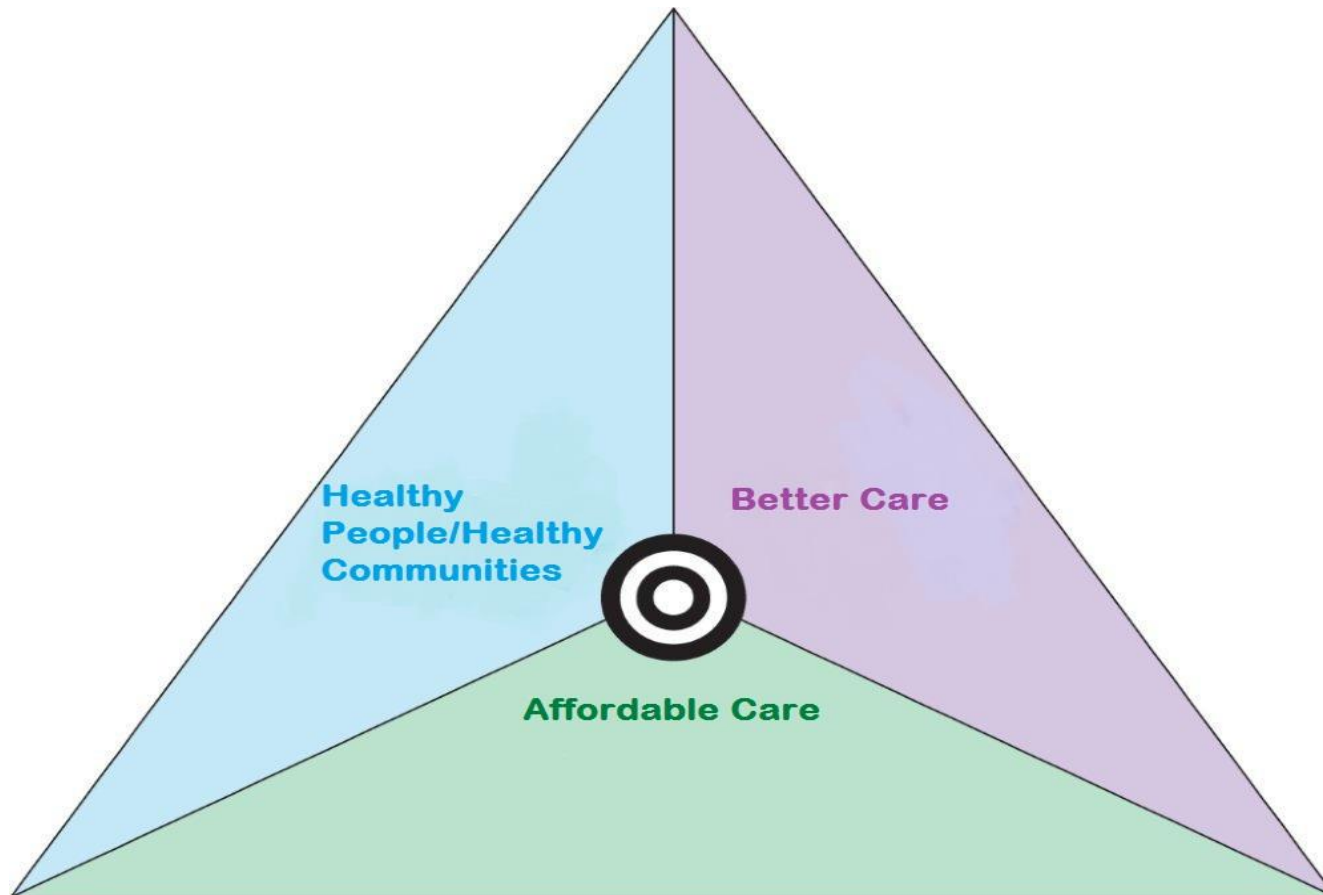
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# Affordable Care Act



Working Together to Achieve Better Care, Better Health,  
Lower Costs through Care Improvements





# Many Faces of Prevention Strategies





# Essential Health Benefits



## Qualified Health Plans cover Essential Health Benefits which include at least these 10 categories

Ambulatory patient services	Prescription drugs
Emergency services	Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices
Hospitalization	Laboratory services
Maternity and newborn care	Preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management
Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment	Pediatric services, including oral and vision care (pediatric oral services may be provided by stand-alone plan)



# Prevention Coverage



**As of January 1, 2014 New plans had to provide many **free** preventive services.**

Examples include:

- Blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol tests
- Cancer screenings, including mammograms and colonoscopies
- Counseling to help quit smoking, lose weight, eat healthfully, identify depression, reduce alcohol use, and avoid sexually transmitted infections
- Screenings for sexually transmitted infections
- Regular well-woman, well-baby, and well-child visits
- Routine immunizations against flu, pneumonia, measles, polio, meningitis, and many other diseases
- Care to ensure healthy pregnancies

[healthcare.gov/what-are-my-preventive-care-benefits](http://healthcare.gov/what-are-my-preventive-care-benefits)





# ACA included provisions

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
**HRSA**  
Health Resources and Services Administration

- Public health workforce development
- Enhancement of the evidence base for prevention and public health
- First dollar coverage of clinical preventive services by all public and private insurers (for new plans)

## The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) sets the stage for a comprehensive national approach to population-based prevention.

- Health in all policies through a National Prevention Strategy
- Recognition of policy and environmental change approaches to public health
- Mandatory appropriation





# National Prevention Strategy



## Key Strategic Directions:

- **Healthy and Safe Community Environments**  
Communities, including homes, schools, public spaces, and work sites, can be transformed to support well-being and make healthy choices easy and affordable.
- **Clinical and Community Preventive Services**  
Ensure that prevention-focused health care and community prevention efforts are available, integrated, and mutually reinforcing
- **Empowered People**  
Support people in making healthy choices
- **Eliminating Health Disparities**  
Eliminate disparities, improving the quality of life for all Americans







## Recommendations:

1. Improve quality of air, land, and water.
2. Design and promote affordable, accessible, safe, and healthy housing.
3. Strengthen state, tribal, local, and territorial public health departments to provide essential services.
4. Integrate health criteria into decision making, where appropriate, across multiple sectors.
5. Enhance cross-sector collaboration in community planning and design to promote health and safety.
6. Expand and increase access to information technology and integrated data systems to promote cross-sector information exchange.
7. Identify and implement strategies that are proven to work and conduct research where evidence is lacking.
8. Maintain a skilled, cross-trained, and diverse prevention workforce.





## Recommendations:

1. Support the National Quality Strategy's focus on improving cardiovascular health.
2. Use payment and reimbursement mechanisms to encourage delivery of clinical preventive services.
3. Expand use of interoperable health information technology.
4. Support implementation of community-based preventive services and enhance linkages with clinical care.
5. Reduce barriers to accessing clinical and community preventive services, especially among populations at greatest risk.
6. Enhance coordination and integration of clinical, behavioral, and complementary health strategies



## Recommendations:

1. Provide people with tools and information to make healthy choices.
2. Promote positive social interactions and support healthy decision making.
3. Engage and empower people and communities to plan and implement prevention policies and programs.
4. Improve education and employment opportunities



## Recommendations:

1. Ensure a strategic focus on communities at greatest risk.
2. Reduce disparities in access to quality health care.
3. Increase the capacity of the prevention workforce to identify and address disparities.
4. Support research to identify effective strategies to eliminate health disparities.
5. Standardize and collect data to better identify and address disparities.





# NPS Prevention Priorities to Improve Health



## **Evidence-based changes that have greatest potential to reduce leading causes of preventable M&M**

- Tobacco Free Living
- Prevent Substance Abuse
- Healthy Eating
- Active Living
- Injury & Violence Free Living
- Reproductive & Sexual Health
- Mental and Emotional Well-Being



Source: National Prevention Council Action Plan, June 2012

## Integrating Public Health and Primary Care



- **Behavioral Health**
- **Oral Health**
- **Mothers and Children**
- **Population Health**





# Opportunities for Public Health



## Covering more people with health insurance improves population health.

- ❑ People can get care they need to stay healthy.
- ❑ Many preventive care services are free for new health plans.
- ❑ People with health coverage get more preventive care and report better physical and mental health.





## Final Thoughts

“The health of the individual is almost inseparable from the health of the larger community. And the health of each community and territory determines the overall health status of the Nation”

*(Source: Koh; A 2020 vision for healthy people. N Engl J Med 2010).*





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