

# Summary

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## Where is the health of Hawaii County worse than the state?

There are many health disparities, and opportunities for improvement in Hawaii County:

### *Health Outcomes*

- ◆ Higher death rates for
  - All causes
  - Traffic-related
  - Coronary heart disease and stroke
  - Overall cancer and breast cancer
  - Suicide
- ◆ Lower life expectancy
- ◆ Higher teen birth rates
- ◆ Higher confirmed child abuse rates

### *Social and Economic Determinants*

- ◆ Higher unemployment
- ◆ Lower income per capita, and lower median income
- ◆ More children living in poverty, more households living under 200% of federal poverty
- ◆ Higher Gini index of income inequality

### *Health-Related Behaviors*

- ◆ Higher percent of population smoking
- ◆ Higher percent of population who are overweight
- ◆ Higher percent of population who are obese

### *Health Systems*

- ◆ Higher percent of population uninsured
- ◆ Fewer physicians and dentists per 100,000 population
- ◆ Higher percent of population who do not have a personal doctor
- ◆ Fewer people with high blood pressure, who are taking medication to treat blood pressure
- ◆ Lower percent of female population receiving prenatal care
- ◆ Higher acute hospitalization rates for diabetes

## Where is the health of Hawaii County declining?

The following indicators of declining health suggest a framework and focus for improvement:

### *Health Outcomes*

- ◆ Increasing suicide death rates
- ◆ Increasing percent of population with diabetes and high blood pressure

### *Social and Economic Determinants*

- ◆ Increasing percent of population unemployed
- ◆ Decreasing per capita income

### *Health-Related Behaviors*

- ◆ Increasing percent of population reporting binge drinking
- ◆ Increasing percent of population overweight and increasing percent obese
- ◆ Increasing students who drove in a car when they had been drinking (State data)

### *Health Systems*

- ◆ Higher percent of population uninsured
- ◆ Higher percent of population who do not have a personal doctor

### Where is there improvement in health indicators in Hawaii County?

There is evidence of improvement in Hawaii County over the past decade in the following areas, although these rates are still higher than the state rates:

- ◆ Traffic death rate
- ◆ Confirmed child abuse rate
- ◆ Infant mortality rate
- ◆ Smoking rate
- ◆ Coronary heart disease death rate
- ◆ Stroke death rate

### Where is there island wide collaboration to improve?

- ◆ Island-wide collaboration to reduce **traffic deaths** and injuries is supported by the *Motor Vehicle Crash Reduction Group* facilitated by *NHOP* and the Big Island Trauma Advisory Group, facilitated by DOH Injury Prevention and Control division with state trauma funds.
- ◆ Island-wide collaboration to reduce **child abuse** with the statewide Differential Response System in collaboration with Neighborhood place of Kona and Puna and the statewide, *Hawaii Children's Trust*, *Joyful Heart Foundation* collaboration for *One Strong Ohana*; Hui Laulima consortia of service providers; and the Hawaii County Youth Builders Coalition.
- ◆ There is island wide collaboration to **reduce infant mortality** through the *Malama Perinatal Project* and the *Hawaii Collaborative Health Initiative* to improve neonatal care.
- ◆ The Department of Health has lead environmental and individual efforts to **reduce smoking** statewide and island-wide.
- ◆ There is also a growing island-wide effort to **improve health systems and access to high quality healthcare** through: the *Hawaii Island Healthcare Alliance* efforts to align and improve policy change and to support the effort to “grow our own” providers through the *Family Practice Residency Program* in Hilo; the *Hawaii Island Beacon Community*, which is working to improve care for chronic disease through clinical transformation, improving health information exchange, and engaging the community in healthy lifestyles.

### Where is there evidence of progress in North Hawaii?

Although it is harder to document change in indicators in the smaller population in North Hawaii, there is evidence of increased focus to improve the community selected priorities (see page 11) especially improving educational attainment and increasing the proportion of students who get a 13<sup>th</sup> year of school. There is evidence of growing infrastructure needed for collaboration and improvement in North Hawaii:

- Increasing student engagement through mentoring and hands on projects at *Earl's Garage*; and mentoring through Five Mountains' *Hawaii Life Plan* program.
- Increasing 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading skills for all kinds of learners via the *Hawaii Learning Resource* student summer academic enrichment camps, parent/teacher education; DOE; *Keiki Steps to Literacy*; the *P-3 Program* and links with the statewide *P-20* program.
- Increasing the number of students who have the opportunity for a 13<sup>th</sup> year of school through scholarships and the development of a West Hawaii Community College campus.
- Developing public-private collaboration through several new organizations and groups: North Hawaii Education Research Center, Kohala Center, and Māla'ai Garden.

# Recommendations

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## Where are the biggest needs and opportunities for improvement?

Reducing health disparities in Hawaii County and improving population health will require addressing the underlying social economic, behavioral and health system issues contributing to those disparities. Recommendations for priority interventions in each domain are listed below.

### Social and Economic Determinants

- Reduce unemployment, and develop conditions which raise income per capita through countywide economic development AND simultaneously “preserving what’s special.”
- Improve income per capita through economic development and workforce development in education, science, energy and healthcare.
- Strengthen the public education system including community colleges on Hawaii Island in order to support workforce development and economic development of the science sector.

### Health-Related Behaviors

- Reduce smoking and increase access to culturally relevant smoking cessation efforts.
- Community, employer, school and consumer engagement in healthy lifestyles, especially for children
- Support systems and policy interventions to improve access to healthy nutrition and physical activity, especially in public education system.

### Health Systems

- Improve access to primary care by “growing our own” primary care workforce, through a *Family Practice Residency program in Hilo* and through effective recruitment and retention.
- Improve access to specialty care through regional collaboration and planning for specialty services, centers of excellence, recruitment and retention of specialists, call coverage, visiting specialists, effective use of technology, and regional collaboration on facilities planning.
- Integrate screening for smoking, problem drinking, chemical dependency, overweight and depression into primary care, prenatal care and emergency care.
- Increase the effectiveness and capacity of existing providers through:
  - More effective use of technology to share information and to manage population health.
  - More effective use of a primary care team of providers including physician assistants and nurse practitioners.
  - Clinical practice transformation to develop patient centered medical homes, increased use of evidence based medicine, care coordination and effective transitions of care
  - Improved patient centered end of life care
- Increase access to health insurance.