ACT NOW TO SAVE LIVES AND MONEY

A CALIFORNIA WELLNESS TRUST

Investing just $1 in prevention for every $1,000 we spend on healthcare is the smartest way to fundamentally reshape the health of California.

THE CRIPPLING COSTS OF NOT INVESTING IN PREVENTION

Race, income, historical injustices, and community conditions—including limited access to healthy food, physical activity, safe neighborhoods, and clean water—can determine the quality and length of your life. Investing just $10 per person per year in building healthier communities—equal to $400 million or $1 for every $1,000 spent on healthcare—would save billions in healthcare costs for families and taxpayers while creating more equitable opportunities for all Californians to thrive.

Over 40 percent of all healthcare expenditures treat just six common health conditions—cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, asthma, arthritis, and depression—many of which can be prevented or delayed. The result: over $370 billion in costs to California families and taxpayers each year.

People of color or low-income are more likely to develop and die from chronic disease or injury. For example, poor food environments & targeted junk food marketing increase obesity & more than double diabetes deaths for Latinos & Blacks. Tobacco marketing appropriating Native imagery has contributed to American Indians having the highest smoking rate of any race in CA. Communities are mobilizing for change & need resources.

Lower productivity and lost workdays for Californians with chronic conditions and their caregivers cost businesses over $106 billion each year. The annual cost of healthcare—including premiums and out-of-pocket costs—increased by $700 in 2019, reaching $14,800 per worker at large employers.

ONE SOLUTION: A CALIFORNIA WELLNESS TRUST

Establish a mechanism to ensure sustained, dedicated funding of programs to promote health equity and prevent the leading causes of premature illness, injury, and death, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, violence, and dementia.

Wellness trust initiatives in Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Massachusetts have proven the power of sustained investment to scale-up effective prevention programs and fund community-led innovations. These new funding models have already seen significant reductions in chronic disease and injury.

LEARN MORE AT: WWW.CA-ALLIANCEFORPREVENTIONFUNDING.ORG
DATA SOURCES AVAILABLE AT WWW.CA-ALLIANCEFORPREVENTIONFUNDING.ORG/DATA-SOURCES
HOW A CALIFORNIA WELLNESS TRUST WOULD WORK

EFFECTIVE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Sustained funding would allow nonprofit organizations and health departments to better implement and scale effective policies and programs that work primarily outside of healthcare settings to reduce the underlying causes of preventable illness and injury, making California communities healthier places to live.

Evidence-based programs and pilot innovations, guided by community culture and priorities, could:

- Promote healthy eating and food environments
- Increase access to safe physical activity
- Prevent childhood trauma
- Improve neighborhood safety and reduce substance use
- Support aging with independence and dignity
- Promote youth leadership and development

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS

Legal analysis identified taxes on one or more unhealthy products contributing to chronic disease and/or injuries as the best potential funding sources. Additional alternatives are under study.

Funds would be allocated among health departments, nonprofit organizations, community health centers, and tribal organizations to act in concert to advance greater health and equity. Spending would benefit all Californians, reaching residents of all ages, from all regions, and from all of California’s diverse ethnicities and identities. Funds may not supplant existing resources.

The following chart shows a recommended distribution of resources based on $10 per person per year, equal to about $400 million annually.

ACCOUNTABILITY & OVERSIGHT

Form and staff an oversight committee, with members who have expertise and experience in equity and prevention and are appointed by the governor and legislature, to advise the State on priorities for and administration of the fund, publish regular progress reports, and report back to the legislature.

To ensure coordination of local efforts, local health departments would staff an existing community health coalition or form a new one. All local organizations awarded funding would be required to participate. Rigorous evaluation would be an integral part of the Wellness Trust’s design, monitoring changes in community conditions, equity in health outcomes, and key risk factors for illness, injury, and premature death.