

BRFSS Data as Measures for Montana's State Health Improvement Plan

Introduction

In June 2013, Montana released its newest five-year State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), entitled *Big Sky. New Horizons. A Healthier Montana: A Plan to Improve the Health of Montanans*.¹ It sets forth population health targets for Montanans to achieve within the next five years. The national *Healthy People 2020* (HP2020) is a set of health goals for the entire country to achieve by the end of this decade.² These two initiatives cover a comprehensive set of disease prevention and health promotion objectives that draw on data from a wide range of sources to measure Montana's and the nation's health over time. Many of the Montana SHIP objectives and HP2020 objectives are similar. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a survey that collects self-reported health and behavior information, is a data source for many of the SHIP and HP2020 objectives. This report provides BRFSS data for relevant SHIP and HP2020 metrics that were used to assess the State of the State's Health in 2013.³

Methods

BRFSS is an annual telephone survey of non-institutionalized adults ages 18 years and older conducted as a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and states and territories. The BRFSS questionnaire runs the calendar year, with a new questionnaire starting every January. There is a core set of questions that are asked every year and a rotating set of questions asked every other year. States can add their own questions specific to their needs. As the health of the population changes and new objectives are created for future health improvement plans, BRFSS can add new questions to help monitor progress. The data provided below are from the most current year that the survey question was asked. The table provides the current BRFSS prevalence estimates for some of the metrics that are measured by selected Montana SHIP and HP2020 health initiatives and indicate Montana's current status in meeting the targeted objectives.

Results

Of the twelve Montana SHIP objectives that are measured by BRFSS, two are health status indicators, five are modifiable risk behaviors, and five are clinical preventive practices. As of 2012, Montanans have met one SHIP objective, reducing the proportion of adults who engage in no leisure-time physical activity in the past month. For the corresponding HP2020 objectives, Montanans have met the target of reducing the proportion of adults who engage in no leisure-time physical activity and increasing the proportion of adult motor vehicle occupants who always wear a seatbelt.

BRFSS Prevalence Estimates for Selected Montana *SHIP* and *HP2020* Objectives *

Objectives:	SHIP Target 2018 ¹	HP2020 Target ^{2,3}	Montana Prevalence Wt. % (95% CI) ⁴	Target Status
Health Status Indicators				
Increase the proportion of adults who report their health is good or excellent. ⁵	≥ 86.0		84.2 (83.2-85.2)	
Increase the proportion of adults who report no days of poor mental health in the past 30 days.	≥ 73.0		65.8 (64.5-67.2)	
Modifiable Risk Behaviors				
Decrease the proportion of adults who report they engage in no leisure-time physical activity.	≤ 22.0	≤ 36.2	20.5 (19.4-21.6)	Both Targets Met
Decrease the proportion of adults who report they are overweight or obese.	≤ 54.0		61.3 (59.9-62.7)	
Decrease the proportion of adults who report they are smokers.	≤ 19.0	≤ 12.0	19.7 (18.6-20.9)	
Decrease the proportion of adults who report binge drinking.	≤ 15.0	≤ 24.4	21.7 (20.5-23.0)	HP2020 Target Met
Increase the proportion of motor vehicle occupants that report they always wear their seatbelts.	≥ 83.0		70.1 (68.8-71.4)	
Clinical Preventive Practices				
Increase the proportion of all adults immunized against influenza in the previous year.	≥ 60.0		35.5 (34.2-36.8)	
Increase the proportion of adults 65 and older ever immunized with pneumococcal vaccine.	≥ 80.0	≥ 90.0	69.5 (67.2-71.7)	
Increase the proportion of adults 50 years of age and older who report they are up-to-date with colorectal cancer screening.	≥ 61.0		57.4 (55.7-59.2)	
Increase the proportion of women 50 years of age and older who report they are up-to-date with breast cancer screening.	≥ 80.0		68.9 (66.8-70.9)	
Increase the proportion of women who report they are up-to-date with cervical cancer screening.	≥ 86.0		76.1 (74.1-78.0)	

* All objectives are for adults 18 years of age and older unless otherwise specified.

¹ Further details regarding *SHIP* objectives can be found at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/ship/>.

² Further details regarding *HP2020* objectives can be found at: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/default.aspx>.

³ Cells with no target indicate there is no corresponding *HP2020* objective.

⁴ Current data are from 2011 and 2012.

⁵ Objective is from the Public Health and Safety Division Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan can be found online at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/documents/StrategicPlan.pdf>

Discussion

The target values for the objectives shared by *SHIP* and *HP2020* are different because Montana's objectives were set with reference to the current status of the State's health. In addition, *SHIP* goals are measuring the health challenges of Montana residents over a five year period and the time span for *HP2020* is for an entire decade.

The BRFSS survey measures the prevalence of high-risk behaviors, chronic illnesses, and preventive health service utilization, providing valuable information for developing and monitoring interventions designed to reduce premature death and disease. Many of the leading causes of disease and illness are the result of individual behaviors, or social and environmental factors that are modifiable. BRFSS data allow us to measure the health of Montanans over time and in comparison to other states or the nation as a whole. By knowing where we stand, we know where to focus our continuing efforts and limited resources for improvement of the public's health.

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Background: *The Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) has been collecting and reporting state-specific, population-based estimates of health-related data since 1984. The purpose of this statewide telephone survey of Montana residents aged 18 and older is to gather information regarding personal health risk behaviors, selected medical conditions, and the prevalence of preventive health care practices among Montana adults. A full set of Montana yearly questionnaires and health indicators can be found at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) BRFSS database query system at: www.brfss.mt.gov. The CDC website also provides national, state, and some local area prevalence estimates of health indicators, as well as access to downloadable datasets for further analyses at: www.cdc.gov/brfss.*

Survey Limitations: *The BRFSS relies on self-reported data. This type of survey has certain limitations: many times, respondents have the tendency to underreport some behaviors that may be considered socially unacceptable (e.g., smoking, heavy alcohol use); conversely, respondents may over report behaviors that are desirable (e.g., physical activity, nutrition). Cross-sectional design makes casual conclusions impossible. In addition, the sample sizes used to calculate the estimates in this report vary as respondents who indicated, "don't know," "not sure," or "refused" were excluded from most of the calculation of prevalence estimates. BRFSS data collected through 2008 excludes households without landline telephones.*

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References:

- ¹ Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. **Big Sky. New Horizons. A Healthier Montana: A Plan to Improve the Health of Montanans (The State Health Improvement Plan/SHIP)**. Helena, MT, 2012. The full report can be found on the web at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/ship/>.
- ² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. **Healthy People 2020**. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Available online at: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/>.
- ³ Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. **The State of the State's Health: A Report on the Health of Montanans**. Helena, MT, 2013. The full report can be found on the web at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/ship/>.
- ⁴ Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. **Public Health and Safety Division Strategic Plan**. Helena, MT, 2012. The full report can be found on the web at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/documents/StrategicPlan.pdf>.

