

Heart Disease Deaths Declining in Connecticut

Hartford – Data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) show that mortality from heart disease has been declining in Connecticut since 1999.

Age-adjusted death rates from heart disease declined 28.7 percent in Connecticut between 1999 and 2008. The age-adjusted death rates from coronary heart disease and heart failure, two types of heart disease, also declined significantly in this time period. Coronary heart disease death rates declined 39.6 percent and heart failure death rates declined 6 percent. Nationally, the death rate from coronary heart disease declined 30.1 percent and the death rate from heart failure declined 5.5 percent between 1997 and 2006 (http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/NCVDSS_DTM/). For more information on the decline in heart disease in Connecticut see the report *The Burden of Cardiovascular Disease in Connecticut* at: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/heartstrokedata>.

Improved control of high blood pressure and high cholesterol, a decline in the prevalence of smoking, and improvements in treatments, medications, and quality of care contributed to the decline in heart disease death rates. Despite these improvements, heart disease remains the number one cause of death in Connecticut and the United States.

The Connecticut DPH's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program (HDSP) works to reduce the burden of heart disease and stroke among Connecticut's residents. For example, HDSP's Black Resident Program provides risk assessments, health education, and outreach to residents in an effort to reduce risk factors that lead to heart disease. Also, the Women's Healthy Heart Initiative is developing and conducting healthy lifestyle programs for women in Hartford, addressing risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Additionally, community-developed, culturally specific materials addressing heart disease, stroke, and diabetes in Connecticut's Hispanic population are being created. For more information on DPH programs see: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3135&q=387022>.

In September 2011, the Connecticut DPH announced that it will receive \$493,891 in federal Affordable Care Act funds to support community prevention efforts to reduce chronic disease. This initiative, known as the Community Transformation Grant, is designed to help reduce the burden of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer, by supporting prevention programs proven to have a positive impact on health.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with nonprofit and private organizations, is launching Million Hearts, a national campaign with evidence-based interventions and strategies aimed at preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years (<http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/about-mh.shtml>).