

Assessing the health status of the population is a fundamental responsibility of public health. Such an assessment is an important guide for public health policy development and for evaluating existing public health programs. The 18 Health Status Indicators for the Year 2000 were developed as part of the Healthy People 2000 process under the leadership of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention with input from public health professionals in state and local health departments, health professional organizations, and the academic community. These indicators were developed to:

- be few in number;
- provide a comprehensive measure of community health;
- include measures of overall community health;
- include measures of specific problems that warrant public health attention;
- be measurable at federal, state, and local levels using available data;
- be understandable and acceptable;
- be outcome oriented and imply specific interventions compelling action.

This report presents an update on the Health Status Indicators for the Year 2000 for the State of Utah. For each indicator, the trend for Utah is presented to allow an assessment of Utah's progress in improving health status as measured by that indicator. In addition, data are presented for the United States overall and for the state that has the best rate for that indicator. For those comparisons, the most recent data available for other states are used, so that those comparisons may not include the most recent Utah data. For many of the indicators, Utah's health status is better than that of the United States overall. Data on the "best state" are presented to provide an indication of those areas where further improvement may be more feasible, based on the achievement of better health status in that "best state."

For each indicator, one or more persons involved in a program to improve health status in the area measured by that indicator were interviewed to identify factors contributing to Utah's health status as measured by that indicator. Information gained from those interviews is included in the narrative for each section.

Health status is affected by many social and economic factors, in addition to specific health behaviors and health care services. Achieving further gains in the health status of Utahns will require a community-wide effort that addresses the general social and economic situation of Utahns as well as specific health care and public health services. It is hoped that this report will stimulate and provide information to guide such efforts.