



Preventive Health Insurance Benefits in NC and the Preventive Benefits Watch

The News

- Five years ago, none of the health insurance plans (private or public) in the state offered preventive benefits in the areas of tobacco cessation, nutrition, obesity, or physical activity.
- Today, North Carolina leads the nation with the largest increase in preventive coverage from 2000 to 2006. Of NC plans, 100 percent provide some preventive coverage as a result of voluntary participation in the NC Preventive Benefits initiative, a partnership between NC Prevention Partners, the NC Division of Public Health, and NC health insurers.
- NC is the only state in the nation with health plans voluntarily sharing this information.
- Through the Preventive Benefits Watch, NC Prevention Partners profiles and monitors the preventive benefits coverage offered by all NC health plans in the areas of tobacco cessation, nutrition, obesity, physical activity, diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol.

Why Prevention Matters--Facts behind the News¹

- Each year, North Carolina spends nearly \$16 billion on healthcare costs that could be prevented.
- Tobacco use; nutrition, overweight, and obesity; and physical inactivity cost nearly \$5000 per employee.
- Tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity account for 2/3 of all preventable diseases and deaths in North Carolina. Moreover, 95.9% of adults in this state have at least one of these risky behaviors, while 39.1% have all three.
- These risk factors contribute to heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, diabetes, and many more diseases that ultimately lead to nearly 200,000 hospitalizations and 35,000 deaths in NC each year.

For more information, contact:

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¹ *NC Prevention Report Card 2005*, NC Prevention Partners.