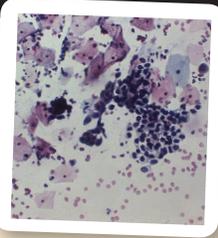


# Chronic Disease Timeline

## 100 Years of Public Health



**Early 1900s** – Early on, nutritional deficiencies were most often determined to be the cause of chronic diseases such as pellagra and rickets.

It took scientists years to discover that the cure was as simple as adding the missing nutrients to the affected individual's diet.

**Late 1930s – early 1940s** – The beginnings of cancer and heart programs were in place to help serve indigent populations and those without access to care.

Historically, chronic diseases have disproportionately affected individuals who are poor and less educated. Public health efforts began to acknowledge these trends.

**1945** – A statewide cancer registry was authorized by the legislature as a freestanding Cancer Commission.

Arkansas was one of the first states to develop a statewide cancer registry, which remained in use for more than 30 years. The first cancer registry was a paper and pencil registry, nothing like the computerized registries of today. Although computerized in 1970, the reporting was voluntary and data quality was poor. In 1979, the registry was discontinued due to the relatively weak structure and authority, in addition to state funding cuts.

**1962** – The Department's Division of Chronic Disease started the first visits by public health nurses to chronically ill persons in their homes.

Chronic disease-related activities had slowly expanded, and by 1962, these nurse visits were conducted under orders of private physicians.

**1962-1965** – A pilot project for home health visits was conducted in Ouachita County. By 1965, public health nurses made home visits to patients with chronic diseases in 33 counties and most visits were paid for by the federal Medicare program. This was the start of the In-home Services program.

**1970s** – Cancer Registry and Cancer Screening divisions were housed in the Department's Bureau of Cancer and Special Services.

**1979** – A Hypertension program and a Chronic Disease program were created.

**By 1981** – A new Section of Environmental and Personal Health Maintenance was created to provide management support to the growing chronic disease programs.

**Late 1980s** – A new Division of Chronic Disease and Disability Prevention was created. The disability prevention programs were funded through a new federal grant.

**By the late 1980s** – Both the Chronic Disease program and the Hypertension program under the Division of Health Maintenance were eliminated.

The programs were cut as a result of the emergence of infectious diseases, like HIV/AIDS, and budget cuts, forcing a shift in the Department's priorities.

**1989** – Through Act 435 of 1989, the Arkansas Legislature again authorized the creation of a Central Cancer Registry and transferred all functions to the Arkansas Department of Health.

**By 1990** – Through federal block grant funding, two small programs were created: a stroke prevention program called Strike out Stroke and a Community Health Program.

The Department continued to rebuild and expand its Chronic Disease and Disability Prevention Division with the addition of these two small programs.

**1992** – The Department received capacity building federal funds from the CDC to start a Federal Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. This later became the hugely successful and popular BreastCare Program.

The Health Department received implementation funding in 1997 for its Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, which meant that qualified women could receive screening and diagnosis for breast and cervical cancers. Sponsored by State Representative Dr. Joretta Wilkins of Pine Bluff, the Breast Cancer Act of 1997 was adopted by the legislature and provided supplemental state funds for screening and diagnosis, as well as treatment of diagnosed breast cancers. In 1999, the Arkansas BreastCare Program, housed within the Health Department, became fully operational. In 2000, BreastCare women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer became eligible for Medicaid medical services under

continued on back →



# Chronic Disease Timeline continued

the federal Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act of 2000. Medicaid Category 07 was established for BreastCare-eligible women, making enrollees with diagnosed breast or cervical cancer eligible for ALL Medicaid services in 2001.

**1994** – With approval from the CDC’s Program of Cancer Registries, the Department implemented the Arkansas Central Cancer Registry.

**1996** – The first Worksite Wellness Program was funded with \$37,000 from a Preventive Health Block Grant.

**1996** – The Arkansas Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP) was funded by the CDC.

The DPCP was created to define and monitor the burden of diabetes and to develop new approaches to diabetes control by raising community awareness and coordinating health system efforts.

**1998** – Arkansas was one of a few states selected as a planning state by the CDC to receive training and technical assistance for comprehensive cancer prevention and control.

Although the state received no funding for these cancer activities at that time, the Department partnered with internal programs and external organizations to form the Arkansas Cancer Control Taskforce. The Arkansas Cancer Control Taskforce later became the Arkansas Cancer Coalition.

**Late 1990s** – Obesity rates began to skyrocket due to poor diet and increased physical inactivity.

As more and more children and adults became obese, the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and stroke began to surge.

**By the early 2000s** – The Department’s Division of Chronic Disease and Disability Prevention included Breast and Cervical Cancer Control (BreastCare), Comprehensive Cancer Control, Cardiovascular Health, Diabetes Prevention and Control, Arkansas Central Cancer Registry, Tobacco Prevention and Education, Traumatic Brain Injury Surveillance, Worksite Wellness, and disability prevention programs targeting child safety seats and fire prevention.

**By the early 2000s** – Diabetes was the sixth leading cause of death in the state and Arkansas ranked nearly last in availability of key diabetes resources.

Arkansas was leading the nation in deaths from stroke, with stroke being the third leading cause of death in the state.

Arkansas had the 15th highest heart disease mortality rate in the U.S., with heart disease the leading cause of death in the state.

**2000** – Arkansas became one of 14 states selected to receive core capacity funding from the CDC to establish a cardiovascular health program.

In 2004, Arkansas was selected by CDC as the only state to receive CDC funding to move its cardiovascular program from capacity building to basic implementation.

**2001** – The Arkansas Cancer Control Taskforce wrote the Arkansas Cancer Plan: A Framework for Action 2001-2005 and, soon after was awarded implementation status with funding from the CDC.

**2003** – The Arkansas legislature passed Act 1220 that established a statewide Child Health Advisory Committee.

Taking the lead in the fight against childhood obesity with the strong support of Governor Mike Huckabee, the Arkansas legislature passed Act 1220 that established a statewide Child Health Advisory Committee to develop standards and policy recommendations (adopted in 2007) for healthier foods and physical activity in all public schools. The Act also required an annual body mass index (BMI) measurement for each public school student and a corresponding report for the parent. The reforms, which continue today, are supported with the state’s Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) dollars.

**2004** – Governor Huckabee started the Healthy Arkansas Initiative aimed at improving health through lifestyle changes.

Attempting to “make one of the unhealthiest states in the country one of the healthiest,” Governor Mike Huckabee started the Healthy Arkansas Initiative, that focused on physical activity, nutrition, and the elimination of tobacco use.

**2008** – The UAMS College of Public Health released four-year evaluation results that showed an increase in positive attitudes for children and parents regarding healthy eating and physical activity, as well as a decrease in the consumption of junk food, both in homes and at school.

**2011** – The Arkansas Stroke Registry was established with state funding.

The Department, in collaboration with the American Heart Association, began to collect real time data on stroke treatment from hospitals serving Arkansans. The Registry received federal funding in 2012.

