

Insurance Solutions June Newsletter



Be Aware Of These Public Health Issues And The Need For Resolution

1. **Social Media Misinformation/Disinformation Campaigns** - Just one example: The controversy around vaccines and autism continues to have a negative impact on the childhood vaccination rate. This can impact herd immunity and cause the spread of diseases that can lead to serious illness and death.

Health misinformation is widespread on social media. Only if **you** are well-informed can you counter disinformation.

2. **Health Equity** - A person's address may have more impact on a person's health outcomes than any medical treatment. That's sad. For example: 96 million Americans (30%) live in a designated health professional shortage area.

Good grades and higher education are predictors of better health outcomes for youth. Poor health, such as obesity, lack of exercise, teen pregnancy, and drug use, are correlated with lower income levels and poorer overall health.

It is likely that attacking the root of this problem is less costly than dealing with the resulting poor health.

3. **E-Cigarettes** - Although e-cigarettes were developed as an alternative to tobacco use and a method to quit smoking, they've evolved into a public health issue. Let's be clear: The tobacco producers see this as a means to broaden their distribution despite legislation. Some 3.6 million teens reported using e-cigarettes in 2020. Lawsuits against manufacturers claim that they target teens and children with advertising. Look at the advertising. Big Tobacco does target teens and children just as they did with chocolate cigarettes in the past.
4. **Mental Health / Social Isolation** - Before the pandemic, nearly 20% of adults experienced a mental illness. Suicide, mental illness in children and teens and other mental health challenges have increased due to the pandemic, with some figures suggesting a 25% increase worldwide in anxiety and depression. Again, consider the cost of dealing with the results of this problem versus correcting the underlying causes.
5. **Environmental Impact on Health** - With aging water and sewer infrastructure, and exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), the environmental impact on public health can't be underestimated. Exposure to PFAS, these "forever chemicals," has been linked to cancer and adverse effects on pregnancy.

In many cities, water and wastewater infrastructure date back more than a century and require upgrades to continue serving communities effectively. Be aware of this when you are faced with tax increases.

Yes, there are many more, but these five attracted my attention and I want to share this thought with you: Each of us can have an impact on these major issues. By simply being well-informed you can contribute your knowledge to the conversations you have with others, thus influencing their thoughts.

I listed Social Media Disinformation first for a reason. **Be informed**, that's a big part of the resolution of these issues.