

South Carolina

# TurningPoint

Collaborating for a New Century in Public Health

**A strong public health system is crucial for protecting and improving the health of Americans.**

## South Carolina's Public Health

South Carolina leads the nation in many health indicators, from cardiovascular death rates to HIV/AIDS. Particularly troubling are the persistent health disparities between white and African American residents. These indicators and disparities relate to complex community problems associated with lifestyles, the environment, economics, and access to care.

Improving community health requires local public health leadership to support community planned health initiatives.

State budget cuts, categorical federal funding, and new demands for emergency preparedness are stressing the existing structure of state, district, and county public health offices and limiting their ability to respond to local communities' unique needs.

Community partnerships are a critical ingredient for improving community health. We must link community wisdom and professional expertise with the political will to make the necessary changes.

### For more information

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## What is South Carolina Turning Point?

The national Turning Point Initiative aims to transform and strengthen the public health system in the United States by making it more community based and collaborative. In South Carolina, Turning Point is a collaborative process that strengthens the state's capacity to protect and improve the public's health by merging professional expertise and community wisdom with political will. Partners representing a diverse group of public, private, state, and local organizations guide this process.

## How is South Carolina Turning Point improving public health?

- Supporting community-driven health planning that uses data effectively, engages ethnic and minority communities, incorporates environmental factors, and builds community and local health department capacity in areas such as Horry, Georgetown, Hampton, and Orangeburg
- Improving working relationships and building effective partnerships among agencies and organizations working with and within communities to promote health
- Providing critical training for public health professionals and lay leaders to equip them with appropriate leadership skills and the knowledge to improve and protect health in their communities
- Identifying health and environmental data that communities need to inform community action for health improvement and protection
- Creating and sustaining state level commitments to innovation related to improving public health involvement at the local level, despite the state's worst financial crisis in decades

## What can South Carolina Turning Point help you do?

- Access communities that have assessed and prioritized their local public health needs through a nationally recognized, inclusive strategic planning process
- Improve the health of South Carolinians through the support and leadership development of professionals and lay community partners invested in developing a stronger public health system
- Engage professional and lay community leaders from across the state, who can share first hand their successes and challenges with merging professional expertise, community wisdom, and political will to improve their community's health

## Support

The Turning Point Initiative is funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The National Program Office is located at the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine. Contact the National Program Office at 206-616-8410 or visit [www.turningpointprogram.org](http://www.turningpointprogram.org).

