Foreword

Reducing death and disease caused by tobacco is a winnable battle. Proven strategies to reduce tobacco use include implementing high-impact tobacco countermarketing and strong policies that protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke; increasing the price of tobacco products; and having well-funded, sustained, comprehensive tobacco control programs. This report provides state-specific data and information about these strategies as well as other high-impact and cost-effective strategies that we know work to reduce tobacco use and save lives.

While the nation has made tremendous progress in reducing tobacco use, we still are far from the goal of ending the tobacco epidemic. Each day, more than 3,800 young people under 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette and more than 1,000 youth under 18 years of age become daily cigarette smokers. Youth and young adult smoking prevalence that had been dropping for many years have slowed. In fact, there could be three million fewer young smokers today if success in reducing youth tobacco use that was made between 1997 and 2003 had been sustained.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published two editions of *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs* (1999 and 2007) that have provided the structure and recommended levels of state investment for comprehensive programs. The purpose of *Tobacco Control State Highlights 2012* is to provide state-specific data about high-impact and cost-effective tobacco control strategies and measures to track states' progress in tobacco control. The report can also be used to provide policymakers with useful and accessible state-level data to assist with decision making.

The framework for this report is based on the World Health Organization's MPOWER package of high-impact strategies: **M**onitor tobacco use and prevention policies; **P**rotect people from tobacco smoke; **O**ffer help to quit tobacco use; **W**arn about the dangers of tobacco; **E**nforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship; and **R**aise taxes on tobacco. If, within the next 5 years, all state tobacco control programs were to fully implement the strategies described in this report and were funded at CDC-recommended levels, rates of tobacco use would decline precipitously.

It's time to eradicate the harm caused by tobacco use. With additional effort and support for evidence-based, cost-effective strategies that can be implemented now, we will make real and significant progress in our efforts to save lives and accelerate progress in the fight against tobacco use.

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