

## Delaware Healthy Housing Fact Sheet

The home is the most dangerous place for U.S. families.<sup>i</sup> Nearly six million families live in housing rivaling that of developing countries, with broken heating and plumbing, holes in walls and windows, cockroach and rodent infestation, falling plaster, crumbling foundations, and leaking roofs. Millions more in all 50 states live in housing with serious health and safety hazards, including mold, exposed wiring, radon, unvented heaters, toxic chemicals, broken stairs, missing smoke detectors, and other hazards.<sup>ii</sup> Home-based interventions to address health hazards improve health and have a large return on investment: each dollar invested in lead paint hazard control results in a return of \$17–\$221<sup>iii</sup> and each dollar invested in asthma home-based interventions that include education and remediation results in a return of \$5.30 to \$14.00.<sup>iv</sup>

### The need in Delaware

Thirty-five percent of children in Delaware live in households with high housing cost burden, and 18% of children in Delaware live in poverty.<sup>v</sup> The potential effect of high housing cost burden and poverty on children and families is exacerbated by the age of Delaware's housing stock: An estimated 48% of Delaware homes were built before 1978 (over 9% of Delaware's homes were built prior to 1940) and are likely to contain lead-based paint.<sup>vi</sup> Unhealthy conditions found in hazardous housing can lead to lead poisoning, injuries, and asthma and other respiratory problems, in turn resulting in missed school days and poor school performance for children, as well as missed work days for parents.

### The need for funding

To protect the health of Delaware families and prevent continued increases in associated healthcare costs and societal consequences, full funding in FY 2017 and beyond is needed for the following:

- ✓ **CDC's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program = \$35,000,000**
- ✓ **CDC's National Asthma Control Program = \$30,596,000**
- ✓ **HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes = \$230,000,000**

### Funding for healthy housing in Delaware

- Since 1999, eligible cities, counties, and qualifying nonprofits in Delaware have received \$14,537,192 in funding from 5 grants from HUD's Office Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes for lead hazard reduction, healthy homes production, and education and outreach activities. Of this total:
  - \$3.3 million was awarded to the State of Delaware in 2014<sup>vii</sup> for lead-based paint hazard control activities.<sup>viii</sup>
- From FY05 – FY14, Delaware received a total of \$964,694 in funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.<sup>ix</sup>

## ***Delaware Healthy Housing Fact Sheet (continued)***

### **Childhood lead poisoning**

- In 2011, 270 of the children tested in Delaware had an elevated blood lead level, which is five or more micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ); 44 of them had blood lead levels of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  or more.<sup>x</sup>
- Delaware Division of Public Health's Healthy Homes & Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Performs case management, education and/or environmental investigation for children with blood lead levels greater than or equal to 20  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ; <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/files/leadpoiprevsvs.pdf>

### **Asthma<sup>xi</sup>**

- Delaware children under age 4 are more than twice as likely to be hospitalized with asthma as any other age group, about four times as likely to have an asthma-related hospitalization as adults, and experience approximately 3,000 asthma-related hospitalizations a year.
- African American residents in Delaware experience asthma-related hospitalizations at rates nearly three times greater than white residents despite corresponding lifetime and current prevalence rates that do not have such high level of disparity.
- According to the Delaware Health & Social Services Division of Public Health, there is a shortage of Delaware-specific data on asthma prevalence for young children.

### **Radon<sup>xii</sup>**

- Between 2003 and 2001, 13% of homes tested for radon in New Castle County, Delaware tested above the U.S. EPA's recommended action level of 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/l) of air.
- Individual zip code areas in New Castle County ranged up to 27%, with the highest percentages over the EPA action level in Middletown (27%) and Odessa (22%).

### **Injury-related deaths**

- Between 2006 and 2010, unintentional falls were the most common cause of injury death for Delawareans age 75 and older. Overall during this time, unintentional falls accounted for 11 percent of all injury deaths, were the most common reason for injury-related hospital stays, and accounted for almost half (47 percent) of all injury-related hospitalizations.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **Healthcare financing for healthy homes<sup>xiv, xv</sup>**

The National Center for Healthy Housing's November 2014 study regarding state Medicaid reimbursement policies for environmental health services in the homes of people with asthma and children exposed to lead showed that in Delaware some level of Medicaid reimbursement was in place for activities related to asthma but none was in place for lead.<sup>1</sup> However, additional research into the current healthcare financing landscape for home-based asthma services in Delaware shows that at this time, Medicaid beneficiaries in Delaware do not have access to home-based asthma interventions.<sup>xvi</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note: (a) These are self-reported results that have not been independently verified, and (b) the existence of a policy does NOT mean that services are actually being delivered on the ground.

## Delaware Healthy Housing Fact Sheet (continued)

Opportunities for Delaware to further improve reimbursement of environmental health services include:

- Effecting coverage for home-based healthy homes services addressing lead and asthma in the home environment.
- Ensuring that services and supports are included to eliminate or reduce exposure to asthma triggers or lead hazards identified in the home environment.
- Ensuring that the eligibility criteria for any lead-poisoning follow-up services established in Delaware is aligned with the current CDC reference value for lead poisoning (5 µg/dL).

### For additional information, please contact:

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## Funding from HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes

<b>State</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>L or HH</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Program</b>
DE	State of Delaware Health and Social Services	Dover	\$ 3,288,728	L	2014	LBPHC
DE	City of Wilmington	Wilmington	\$ 2,589,695	L	2011	LHRD
DE	State of Delaware	Dover	\$ 2,996,866	L	2007	LBPHC
DE	Delaware Health and Social Services	Dover	\$ 2,961,903	L	2004	LHC
DE	State of Delaware	Dover	\$ 2,700,000	L	1999	

**\$ 14,537,192 Total FY99-FY15**

**Funding from CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and National Asthma Control Programs - DELAWARE**

Program and Grantee	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	TOTALS BY PROGRAM
<b>Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention*</b>											<b>\$ 964,694</b>
Delaware Health & Social Services	\$ 178,869	\$ 112,189	\$ 144,375	\$ 146,250	\$ 141,863	\$ 139,035	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 102,113	
<b>Addressing Asthma in Public Health</b>											<b>\$ -</b>
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Surveillance - Asthma</b>											<b>\$ -</b>
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Other - Asthma</b>											<b>\$ -</b>
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>TOTALS BY FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 178,869</b>	<b>\$ 112,189</b>	<b>\$ 144,375</b>	<b>\$ 146,250</b>	<b>\$ 141,863</b>	<b>\$ 139,035</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 102,113</b>	

**GRAND TOTAL FY05 - FY 14 \$ 964,694**

\* Timeline of CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program's Name:

2005-2010: Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

2011, 2012, 2014: Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

2013: The lead program was not funded.