

## Oklahoma 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, roach 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 to \$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 Oklahoma

Twenty-nine percent of children in Oklahoma live in households with high housing cost burden, and 24% of children in Oklahoma 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 Oklahoma's housing stock. Nearly 20% of Oklahoma's homes were built prior to 1950 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 Oklahoma families and prevent continued increases in associated healthcare costs and societal consequences, full funding in FY 2016 and beyond is needed for the following:

- ✓ **CDC's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program = \$29,257,000**
- ✓ **CDC's National Asthma Control Program = \$30,596,000**
- ✓ **HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes = \$120,000,000**

### Funding for healthy housing in Oklahoma

- Since 1999, eligible cities, counties, and qualifying nonprofits in Oklahoma have received one grant for a total of \$1,774,691 in funding from HUD's Office Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes for lead hazard reduction, healthy homes production, and education and outreach activities. This grant was awarded to the Grand Gateway Economic Development Association in 2002.
- Oklahoma has received a total of \$4,633,060 in funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention and National Asthma Control programs from FY05 – FY14. Of this funding:
  - The Oklahoma State Department of Health has received a total of \$1,657,460 from the Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.
  - The Oklahoma State Department of Health has received a total of \$3,005,600 in funding for asthma-related activities, most recently \$22,345 for surveillance activities in FY14.
- Although originally funded in 2002, the Oklahoma State Department of Health is not currently funded by CDC's National Asthma Control Program.<sup>vii</sup>

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

### **Childhood lead poisoning**

- In 2013, 1,324 of the children tested in Oklahoma had an elevated blood lead level, which is five or more micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ); 190 of them had blood lead levels of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  or more.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Asthma<sup>ix</sup>**

- In Oklahoma, 292,000 adults and 86,900 children had current asthma in 2012.
- Total charges for asthma-related hospitalizations in Oklahomans 15 years and older was \$57.9 million in 2012.
- In 2012, there were 1,928 asthma-related hospitalizations among Oklahoman children, resulting in total charges of \$18.5 million.

### **Radon**

- Nine counties in Oklahoma are categorized by the U.S. EPA as having “moderate potential” for elevated indoor radon levels above 4 pCi/L.<sup>x</sup>

### **Carbon monoxide deaths**

- There were 60 deaths due to carbon monoxide exposure from 2000 to 2007 in Oklahoma.<sup>xi</sup>

### **Injury-related deaths<sup>xii</sup>**

- From 1999 to 2005, unintentional injuries accounted for 12,155 deaths in Oklahoma; 80 of these were Oklahoman children between the ages of 1 and 14 years.
- From 1999 to 2005, the second and third leading cause of all unintentional injury deaths in Oklahoma were poisoning and falls, respectively.

### **National rankings**

- NCHH’s 2013 *State of Healthy Housing* report ranks 45 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) according to healthy housing-related data in the American Housing Survey. The state of Oklahoma has one MSA included in this report. Oklahoma City was ranked 42nd and is categorized as having “most unhealthy” healthy housing characteristics.<sup>xiii</sup>
- The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America’s listing of “Asthma Capitals” for 2014 ranks the 100 largest U.S. metro areas to identify the “most challenging places to live with asthma.” The state of Oklahoma has two cities identified in the top 10 “most challenging”: Oklahoma City and Tulsa are ranked as the fourth and eighth “most challenging” places to live with asthma, respectively.<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Healthcare financing for healthy homes<sup>xv, xvi</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 shows that in [Oklahoma](#) some level of Medicaid reimbursement is in place for

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activities related to lead; none is in place for services related to asthma, and no efforts to explore the possibility of adding these services were identified.<sup>1</sup>

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

- Effecting coverage for home-based asthma services that address environmental triggers 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 lead-poisoning follow-up services in Oklahoma is aligned with the current CDC reference value for lead poisoning (5 µg/dL).

### For additional information, please contact

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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.