

In This Issue:

Chronic Disease

Omar A. Khan, MD, MHS¹ and Katherine Smith, MD, MPH²

1. Editor-in-Chief, Delaware Journal of Public Health; CEO, Delaware Health Sciences Alliance
2. Publisher, Delaware Journal of Public Health; Executive Director, Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, six in ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease.¹ Many live with more than one. These diseases (heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, etc.) have significant health and economic costs, and interventions to prevent, treat, and manage these diseases can make up a large portion of our national and local health care expenditures.

These chronic diseases affect the lives of Delawareans in many ways, and also offer the potential for improvement. Often, improving one area (such as diabetes) requires a comprehensive approach uniting medicine and public health. This approach can thus positively impact many other areas of chronic diseases as well.

Prevention. Preventing these diseases is the best way to keep health care costs down. Some of the best ways to prevent chronic disease are to quit smoking; eat a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy; get regular physical activity; limit alcohol; keep up to date on preventative screenings; take care of your teeth; and get enough sleep.²

Treatment & Management. According to Delaware's Division of Public Health, cardiovascular disease (including heart disease and stroke) is the leading cause of death in the First State, followed by cancer, lung disease, and diabetes – all diseases of a chronic nature.³ This is the DJPH's third issue devoted to chronic disease; the first two issues were published back-to-back in 2017, and looked at statewide initiatives working in the prevention, treatment, and management spheres.

In this issue, we welcome Dr. Laura Lessard and Dr. Angela Herman, researchers and educators from the University of Delaware and Wilmington University, respectively, and experts in the field of chronic disease. The articles within take a look at how COVID-19 fits into the chronic disease world, at how some of our frontline providers are working to prevent chronic disease in special populations, and at some of the programs offered for those groups of people living with chronic disease in the state.

As always, we welcome your feedback! We also take the opportunity to remind you to register for our Annual Dinner Meeting on May 1, 2024. This is a very special annual event and we cover many of the costs involved to make it accessible to the maximum number of attendees. Details are available on our website, at <https://delamed.org>.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, May). National center for chronic disease prevention and health promotion. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm>

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, Oct). How you can prevent chronic diseases. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/prevent/index.htm>
3. Delaware Division of Public Health. (n.d.). Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention. <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dph/dpc/bcd.html>

Copyright (c) 2024 Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.