

# National Association of State Workforce Agencies

Unemployment has been linked to loss of health insurance, unhealthy behaviors, and depression.<sup>1</sup> Because unemployed workers are more likely to be in poor health, and unemployment rates vary by race and ethnicity,<sup>2</sup> unemployment may also contribute to health disparities. As the professional association of State workforce agencies that serve dislocated workers in all 50 U.S. States and major Territories, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) is uniquely qualified to assist in minimizing the health consequences of unemployment by increasing dislocated workers' awareness of available health resources.

*By providing jobseekers with tools and information to address health needs and make healthy choices, NASWA is advancing National Prevention Strategy recommendations related to the Empowered People Strategic Direction.*

## Creating Resources to Advance the National Prevention Strategy

NASWA partnered with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) to incorporate health-related information in products providing dislocated workers with objective financial advice tailored toward their period of unemployment. The two organizations updated FINRA's English- and Spanish-language brochures titled "Job Dislocation: Making Smart Financial Choices after a Job Loss" to include information about accessing low- or no-cost health care (including options available through the Affordable Care Act) and resources for maintaining overall well-being. Over 250,000 brochures in English and Spanish have been distributed to State agencies thus far. By providing jobseekers with tools and information to address health needs and make healthy choices, NASWA is advancing National Prevention Strategy recommendations related to the Empowered People Strategic Direction.

NASWA also worked with the Department of Labor, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Conference of State Legislatures to offer a webinar on the Affordable Care Act that informed State workforce system leaders about health care resources and the links between employment and health, so that State and local staff would be able to respond to customers' needs more holistically. Through this collaboration, State workforce agency officials helped advance National Prevention Strategy recommendations related to Clinical and Community Preventive Services.

Through these partnerships, NASWA found new opportunities to fulfill its mission to advance the State role in the workforce system: Its member agencies are providing new resources on health and other social and support services to newly unemployed jobseekers, using the gateway of the workforce development system. 

## Collaborating to Pursue the National Prevention Strategy

In 2013, NASWA joined a collaboration hosted by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials to identify cross-sector methods for promoting the National Prevention Strategy. Through this collaboration, NASWA staff and members grew more aware of the links between employment status, access to health care, and overall health and well-being. NASWA staff and members recognized their opportunities to disseminate vital health-related information to newly unemployed jobseekers through one-stop career centers, or "American Job Centers."

<sup>1</sup> Driscoll AK, Bernstein AB. Health and Access to Care Among Employed and Unemployed Adults: United States, 2009–2010. (2012). NCHS Data Brief No. 83. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db83.pdf>. Accessed May 28, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Unemployed Workers—Summary: 1990–2010. Labor Force, Employment, & Earnings. U.S. Census Bureau. Available at <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0622.pdf>. Accessed May 29, 2014.