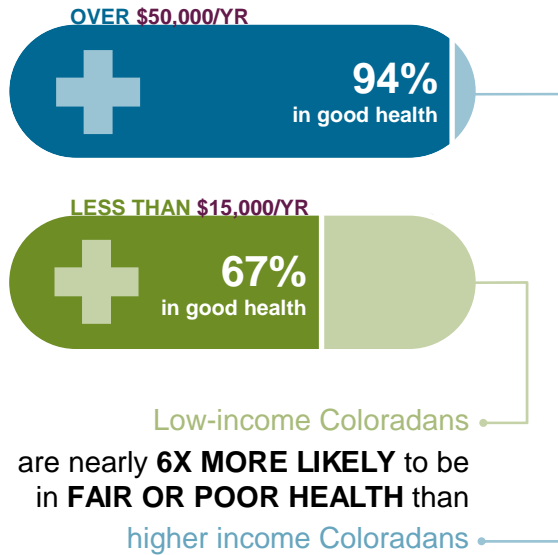




## HEALTH STATUS: COLORADANS by Income<sup>1</sup>



Many factors affect the health of individuals and communities, and income is one of them. Coloradans' health varies widely based on their income.

### Health Status

Many studies have demonstrated the relationship between higher incomes and the ability to maximize health. In 2012, over 210,000 Coloradans had incomes below \$15,000.<sup>2</sup> These Coloradans are nearly six times more likely to say that they are in poor or fair health compared to Coloradans with family incomes over \$50,000.

**“** By connecting low-income, formerly uninsured patients to coverage, and helping to ground them in a medical home, they can then take action to improve their own health. It validates that health care exists for everyone.

—Bebe Kleinman, Doctors Care

## DISEASE & STROKE PREVALANCE by Income<sup>3</sup>

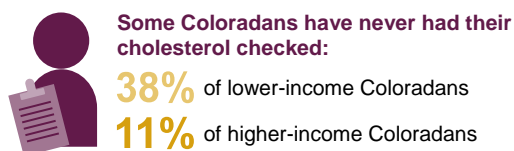
Compared to those that earn **over \$50,000** per year, Coloradans that earn **less than \$15,000** per year are:



### Cardiovascular Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Colorado. Income is a determinant in a person's ability to manage prevention and reduce the risks and impacts of heart disease and stroke. Coloradans with lower incomes are more likely to experience heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes. Furthermore, Coloradans with lower incomes are less likely to access important screenings and preventive care, such as blood pressure and cholesterol checks.

## CHOLESTEROL SCREENING by Income<sup>3</sup>



### References

<sup>1</sup> Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, CDC 2012.  
<sup>2</sup> American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2008-2012.  
<sup>3</sup> Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, CDC 2010-11.  
<sup>4</sup> Cycle of Opportunity. The Bell Policy Center, 2002.  
<sup>5</sup> Not Just Any Job. FRESA, 2013.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Income

**There is room for improvement in the health of Coloradans at every income level.** However, Coloradans with lower incomes face significant challenges to maximize their health due to a lack of affordable quality housing, safe neighborhoods, healthy food choices and the inability to afford health insurance coverage and needed health care. We must take action to ensure that all Coloradans, regardless of income, have the chance to be healthy and thrive in every Colorado community.



## ENABLE EDUCATION & JOB CREATION

A safe and stimulating childhood and a good education are key steps toward a prosperous life.<sup>4</sup> Securing stable employment in a high quality job is another key aspect of economic success and good health. Local, regional, and state efforts need to ensure quality education and support the creation of stable jobs that offer a family-sustaining wage, health care and retirement benefits, training, paths for advancement, and a voice in the workplace.<sup>5</sup>



## INCREASE HEALTH COVERAGE

In 2013, 70% of uninsured Coloradans lived in families with incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. The opening of Connect for Health Colorado and recent changes in Medicaid eligibility have now created new opportunities for coverage. Evaluations of the impacts of these new opportunities should include analysis of the impact on coverage for low-income Coloradans.



## SUPPORT CLINICS & PROVIDERS

Local health clinics and providers across the state provide care that accounts for the complex needs of patients and recognizes the additional hardships of unstable housing, inadequate food, or trouble affording medications and treatments. We must ensure that institutions that serve low-income Coloradans remain economically viable.

“Colorado has made great strides in expanding health coverage, but addressing inequality of health outcomes will require a focus on education, income, environment, access to care and all of those factors that contribute to health.”

—Elisabeth Arenales,  
Colorado Center  
on Law and Policy

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