

Broadband (high-speed) internet access is a key social determinant of health (SDOH) in the Healthy People 2030 National Objectives.<sup>1</sup>

Two factors influence a person's digital health:

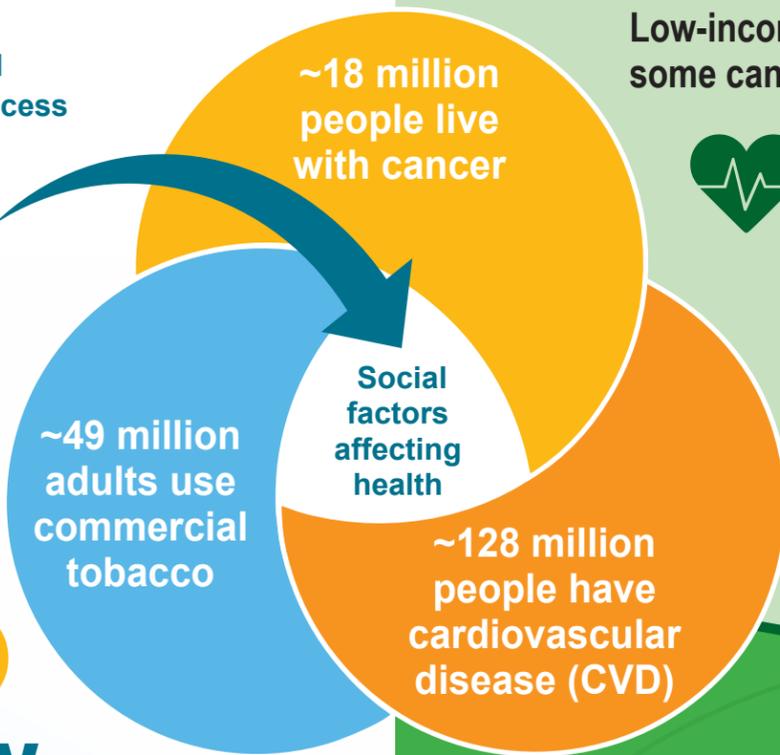
1. Access to reliable, broadband internet, and
2. Digital health literacy (the ability to find, understand, and use digital health resources).

Addressing both factors is equally important for improving health.<sup>2</sup>



In the United States...<sup>3,4,5</sup>

- Broadband Internet Access
- Education
- Location
- Income



The Problems:

Low-income populations are at higher risk of CVD and some cancers associated with commercial tobacco use.<sup>6,7</sup>



**CVD:**

- Is the most common cause of death in adults.<sup>8</sup>
- Is a leading cause of non-cancer deaths among people diagnosed with many cancers.<sup>9</sup>
- May contribute to a person's risk of developing cancer.<sup>10</sup>

**Smoking:**

- Is a shared risk factor for both CVD and some cancers.<sup>11</sup>

**DID YOU? KNOW**

**1 in 4:** Estimated number of people with CVD or cancer who die because of commercial tobacco use<sup>12,13</sup>



**<1 in 3:** Adults who use cessation counseling or FDA-approved medication to quit smoking despite their ability to help people quit long term<sup>14</sup>



Access to evidence-based online programs can increase this number.

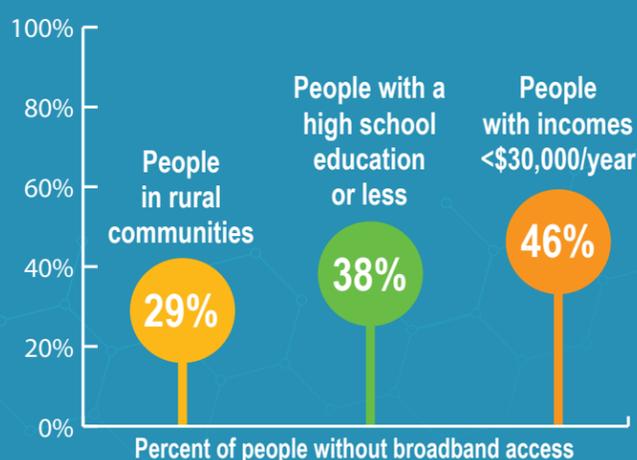
A Solution:

Increase access to home broadband internet. Doing so can affect:

- Health outcomes among people with low incomes due to the increasing use of telemedicine and online tobacco cessation programs.<sup>15</sup>
- Whether people in low-income populations have access to resources to quit commercial tobacco products, reduce their health risks, and manage their health conditions.<sup>16</sup>

Reducing commercial tobacco use is one of the most important ways that populations can lower the risk of CVD and tobacco-related cancers.

Some people don't have access to home broadband internet.<sup>17</sup>



Broadband access for telemedicine appointments is particularly important in areas with shortages of health professionals.

**1 in 4** Americans live in healthcare professional shortage areas (HPSAs).<sup>18,19</sup>

**46%** of U.S. counties don't have any cardiologists.<sup>19</sup>

**86%** of rural U.S. counties don't have any cardiologists.<sup>19</sup>

**55%** of U.S. counties don't have any oncologists.<sup>20</sup>

**68%** of rural U.S. counties don't have any oncologists.<sup>20</sup>



# What Can Be Done? Recommendations for States, Counties, Multi-Sector Organizations, and Communities

Health systems, state and county government programs, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), coalitions, and other sectors can lower CVD and cancer risks in their jurisdictions by improving access to broadband internet and digital resources to help people quit commercial tobacco long term, especially in rural communities and other medically underserved areas (MUAs).<sup>22</sup> The following questions can help organizations maximize their efforts:

QUESTIONS	Recommendations	Resources
<b>Do we understand how broadband access affects health in our community?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn more about broadband as an SDOH and local and federal programs that address broadband access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County Health Rankings and Roadmaps <a href="#">Broadband: A Super Determinant of Health</a></li> <li>The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Cancer Institute <a href="#">Broadband Cancer Collaboration</a> and <a href="#">L.A.U.N.C.H. program</a></li> <li>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration <a href="#">Digital Access: A Super Determinant of Health</a></li> </ul>
<b>Do we know the local CVD, cancer, and broadband landscape so that we can focus our efforts?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use broadband and healthcare access maps and work with local health organizations to map disease and broadband access to better understand local resource limitations.</li> <li>Use CVD and cancer maps to better understand the effects of tobacco-related conditions on your community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FCC <a href="#">National Broadband Map</a></li> <li>CDC <a href="#">Applied Atlas: Maps to Inform Hypertension Management in Your Community</a> and <a href="#">United States Cancer Statistics</a></li> <li>American Cancer Society <a href="#">Screening Disparity Atlas</a></li> <li>Association of Black Cardiologists <a href="#">Enhancing Cardiovascular Health in Cardiology Deserts</a></li> </ul>
<b>Have we identified funding opportunities and programs that can increase and sustain broadband access in our community?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use maps and lists of current funding opportunities to identify funding programs that address the broadband access needs of your community and funding gaps for you and your partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FCC <a href="#">map of available funding and programs</a></li> <li>Connected Nation <a href="#">Connected Community Engagement Program</a></li> <li>National Telecommunications and Information Administration <a href="#">Funding Programs</a></li> </ul>
<b>Where can we learn more about best practices for expanding broadband internet access?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use real-world examples to better understand best practices for planning, implementing, and measuring the success of programs to expand broadband internet access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Broadband Planning &amp; Implementation</a> (Ohio)</li> <li><a href="#">Case Studies in Public-Private Partnership Driving Broadband Deployment</a> (Virginia)</li> <li><a href="#">Comanche County Oklahoma</a> (Oklahoma)</li> <li><a href="#">Eaton County Michigan</a> (Michigan)</li> </ul>
<b>What tools are available to help increase digital literacy in our state, county/parish, or community?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and utilize available resources and trainings on digital literacy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connected Nation <a href="#">Digital Skills Training</a></li> <li>Public Library Association <a href="#">digital literacy resources</a></li> <li>InformationLiteracy.gov <a href="#">Digital Literacy Resources for Educators, Employers, and Volunteers</a> and <a href="#">digital literacy resources</a></li> </ul>
<b>How can we establish or enhance community-clinical linkages to address commercial tobacco cessation, CVD, and tobacco-related cancer risk among people with low incomes who may not have broadband internet access?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish or expand partnerships with CBOs, FBOs, non-profit organizations, national and state community health worker associations, employers in all sectors, health systems (e.g., hospitals, Schools of Nursing), and local libraries.</li> <li>Utilize multi-sector partnerships to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote free, evidence-based, and confidential commercial tobacco cessation resources provided by state tobacco quitlines in rural and metropolitan MUAs.</li> <li>Focus promotion of commercial tobacco cessation resources in counties with high rates of CVD and tobacco-related cancers (e.g., lung, bladder, oral).</li> <li>Promote commercial tobacco cessation resources as part of community benefit, community engagement, and employee health programs.</li> <li>Host educational sessions about comprehensive <a href="#">Medicaid coverage of tobacco cessation by state</a>.</li> <li>Encourage the use of public libraries to access broadband internet for people who cannot have home broadband.</li> <li>Incorporate digital literacy educational sessions as part of CVD, commercial tobacco cessation, or cancer prevention and management education, with an emphasis on identifying credible health information.</li> <li>Encourage the inclusion of digital literacy in program curriculum for healthcare professionals (including nurses) on SDOH, chronic diseases (e.g., CVD, cancer), and commercial tobacco cessation.</li> <li>Use medical and public health professional access data to prioritize promotion of broadband access and free, confidential, and local state tobacco quitlines in areas with limited access to cardiology specialists.</li> <li>Incorporate broadband access data into strategic planning reports for states, counties, parishes, or communities, community health improvement plans, or community health needs assessments.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CDC <a href="#">Community-Clinical Linkages for the Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases guide</a> and <a href="#">Five Reasons Why Calling a Quitline Can Be Key to Your Success</a></li> <li>North American Quitline Consortium <a href="#">Quitline Map</a></li> <li>Connected Nation <a href="#">Partnership Development</a></li> <li>Kansas Department of Health and Environment <a href="#">Creating Effective Partnerships to Improve Behavioral Health Outcomes</a></li> </ul>
<b>How would partnering with CDC's heart health programs help us reach our goals of disseminating online health information?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become a <a href="#">Million Hearts campaign</a> partner with a focus on reducing CVD risks, including through commercial tobacco cessation.</li> <li>Join the <a href="#">Live to the Beat</a> Community Ambassador Network to help reduce local CVD risks, including through commercial tobacco cessation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Million Hearts <a href="#">Partners</a></li> <li>Live to the Beat <a href="#">Community Ambassadors</a></li> <li>Health Resources and Services Administration <a href="#">Community Health Workers Help Patients Use Telehealth</a></li> <li>National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers <a href="#">Digital Navigation Toolkit</a></li> <li>FCC <a href="#">Stay Heart Healthy with Broadband Technologies and Apps</a></li> </ul>

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