

Dear Colleagues:



We are pleased to support the ASTHO 2019 Profile of State and Territorial Public Health, Volume Five. Our nation's experience with the COVID-19 pandemic and previous public health emergencies has revealed how critically important it is to collect inclusive health data. By moving to an interactive and customizable online data visualization system, this newer version of the Profile will not only allow for increased engagement with all users but also provides the nation's most comprehensive look at state and territorial public health services, providing critical support to public officials and policymakers eager to collaborate across sectors for the benefit of America's public health system.

It is my hope this online visualization system will encourage policymakers to begin collecting even more equity-focused data, while supporting the infrastructure, funding, staffing, and programming of our nation's health departments (US states, Washington, D.C., US territories, and freely associated states) in ways that provide everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. For example, equity-focused data could be part of a strategy for community leaders and decision-makers, like tribal leaders, to effectively work in partnership with state health agencies to address the unique needs of their specific communities using evidence-based support.

ASTHO and its health officers serve a critical role in paving the path toward a healthier nation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is grateful to the agencies and staff that devoted considerable time and effort to produce this 2019 Profile.

I look forward to continuing our work together building a vibrant and lasting culture of health for all.

Sincerely,

Richard Besser, MD  
President and CEO  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation