

About Delta Health Alliance

HISTORY

The Delta Health Alliance was founded in 2001 to address health issues in the Mississippi Delta. The Delta Health Alliance is a partnership founded by Delta State University, Mississippi State University, Mississippi Valley State University, University of Mississippi Medical Center, and Delta Council. Delta Health Alliance has 4 associate partners: The Mississippi Association of Community Health Centers, Mississippi Medical Association, Mississippi Hospital Association, and Area Health and Education Centers. This partnership proposes a coordinated and comprehensive program to address the longstanding, unmet rural health needs of the Mississippi Delta. The Delta Health Initiative, as the projects are often referred to, strives to accomplish this by focusing on:

- Increasing access and availability of care
- Conducting and applying health research
- Offering health education programs

NEED

The Mississippi Delta is among the poorest and most disadvantaged areas in the U.S. The eighteen counties that comprise the Mississippi Delta share several characteristics that impact the health of their residents: they are located in rural areas, have high levels of poverty, and their populations have relatively high percentages of African Americans, making them particularly vulnerable to the disproportionate disease burden that accompanies our nation's existing racial and ethnic health disparities.

Here are some quick facts about the Mississippi Delta:

- MS is the 4th most rural state in the nation
- Over 1/2 MS population lives in rural areas
- The Delta has the highest percentage of African Americans in the nation
- Almost 60% of the total population in the Delta is African American, compared to 36% of the total state population, and 12% of the total national population
- ***Without the 18 county core Delta region (excluding DeSoto County), Mississippi would rank average or near average in almost all major health indicators (ranking would improve to 25--32)***

[Click here to view a table that represents some health facts about the Delta](#)

RESPONSE OF DHA TO THOSE NEEDS

In order to respond effectively to the health needs of the Mississippi Delta, we have designed a comprehensive plan for addressing those issues in a coordinated, systematic manner. Components of this plan include:

- Initiatives that address diabetes and obesity
- An Agromedicine Program, designed to help prevent rural and agricultural related health risks
- Initiatives to address the nursing shortage by increasing the recruitment of nursing students and retention of nurses
- A series of assessments that, together, will yield a comprehensive "State-of-the-Health" report of the Mississippi Delta region
- The four partner universities to provide
 - Leadership
 - Expertise
 - Directions for projects
 - Proposal development

and

- the Delta Council to provide
 - Service as fiscal agent
 - Assistance with funding

- Assistance in the development of policy and procedures
- Promotion of networking opportunities

DHA has developed 26 major projects to carry out the comprehensive plan for addressing health issues.