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Environmental Scan of Delaware- Chronic Disease

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## Report

Delaware has several programs to help people manage and prevent chronic diseases, run by the state, nonprofits, and major healthcare providers. Some examples are the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, which focuses on cancer prevention and support, and Screening for Life, which provides free or low-cost cancer screenings. Health Care Connection and the Voluntary Initiative Program work with local providers to improve access to healthcare, and the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program offers workshops for people with long-term health issues. Organizations like West End Neighborhood House, La Red Health Center, and large hospitals such as ChristianaCare and Bayhealth all help with different parts of chronic disease care. These programs cover a range of health issues, like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, lung conditions, and Alzheimer's. Federal, state, and local funds usually help keep these services low-cost or free for Delaware residents.

However, there are areas where Delaware could improve. For example, more funding for preventive services like nutrition classes and fitness programs could help lower disease rates, especially in underserved areas. People in Delaware's rural areas don't have easy access to healthcare facilities, so expanding telemedicine or mobile health units could help reach them. Also, mental health support could be added to these programs, as many people with chronic diseases would benefit from counseling. Finally, public health campaigns targeting high-risk communities could help people learn more about how to prevent chronic diseases.

Looking at larger states, there are some helpful ideas Delaware could consider. New York, for example, uses mobile health vans to bring care to rural areas. California's focus on telemedicine has helped people in remote areas get specialty care, which could work in Delaware too. Minnesota and Arizona have programs where community health workers (CHWs) go directly into communities to support people with chronic conditions. These workers help patients understand their conditions and keep up with treatment, making healthcare more personal and accessible. A similar program in Delaware could be effective, especially for those who might need extra support navigating the healthcare system. North Carolina has also developed strong preventive health programs that focus on nutrition and fitness, helping reduce chronic disease risks through healthier lifestyles. Expanding such programs in Delaware could make it easier for people to access guidance on healthy eating and staying active, which is especially important in areas with limited options. Delaware may be smaller and have fewer resources than big states like New York and California, but this smaller size makes it easier for health organizations to work together. Delaware doesn't need to copy everything these larger states do, but it can adopt strategies that fit its unique needs and resources.

Overall, Delaware has some good programs for helping people with chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. The state is dedicated to making healthcare accessible, and because it's smaller, different health organizations can work together more easily to provide care where it's needed. However, there are still areas that need improvement. People living in rural parts of Delaware might have trouble getting to healthcare facilities, which makes it harder for them to get regular check-ups and manage their chronic conditions. Adding services like mobile health clinics or more telemedicine options, which other states use successfully, could help reach these areas better.

