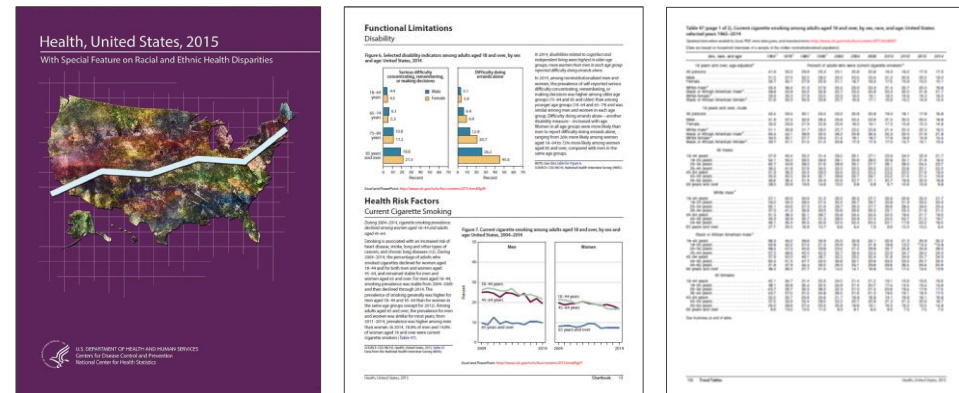# Visualizing *Health, United States*: Expanding the Audience of a Federal Statistical Report

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BACKGROUND: *Health, United States* Report

- Congressionally-mandated, annual report on national health trends
- Submitted by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to the President and Congress
- Includes data from government, private, and global sources
- *Health, United States, 2015*
  - **114** data tables, **27** figures
 - Detailed technical notes and appendix entries

VISUALIZATION OBJECTIVES

Generate interest in the full *Health, United States* report beyond the annual publication date

Showcase indicators of public health interest from the full report and **provide updated data** when possible

Enhance accessibility of health data using more visual content to improve dissemination

VISUALIZATION CHALLENGES

- Create a **succinct, attractive, and informative infographic** without losing the statistical rigor of the full report
- Incorporate **up-to-date estimates**, **data sources**, **technical notes**, and **description of trends** in a compact space
- Optimize layout for dissemination on **social media** platforms

VISUALIZATION RESULT: *Health, United States* Spotlight, Winter 2016
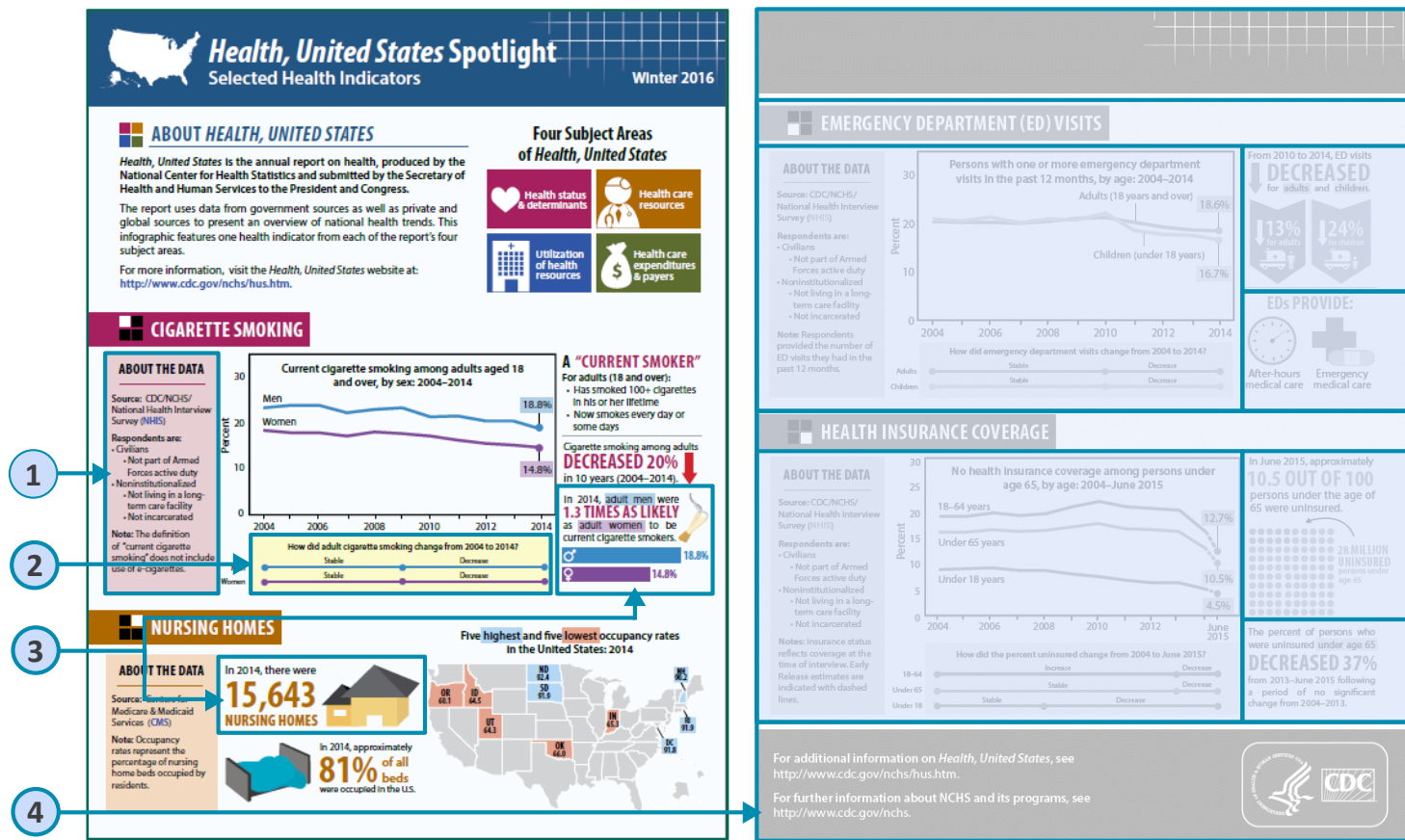
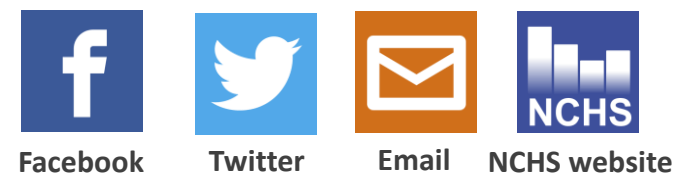### *Health, United States* Spotlight

- Published **quarterly**, with a focus on 4 subject areas:
  - ✓ Selected Health Indicators (Winter)
  - ✓ Health Status & Determinants (Spring)
  - ☐ Health Care Expenditures & Payers (Summer)
  - ☐ Health Care Resources & Utilization (Fall)
- Designed to **deliver complex information** to a non-technical audience
- First Spotlight (on Selected Health Indicators) released on **February 16, 2016**; second Spotlight (on Health Status & Determinants) released **June 13, 2016**

Infographic Features

1. **"About the Data" panel:** Provides details about the data, including links to the data source, information about survey respondents, and technical notes
2. **Trends panel:** Illustrates trend changes, including statistically significant increases and decreases
3. **Data highlights**: Visualizes estimates and comparisons across sociodemographic groups
4. **Modular layout**: Enables readers to scan the graphic quickly, exploring data at their desired level of detail

VISUALIZATION DISSEMINATION

Dissemination Channels

Facebook **Twitter** **Email** **NCHS website**

- Emails were sent to *Health, United States* **listserv subscribers** and NCHS partners.
- **NCHS webpages** (including the *Health, United States* page and NCHS blog) were updated with a thumbnail and description of the Spotlight.
- **10 Tweets** were posted from @NCHStats from Feb. 16–23. Four Tweets contained embedded images.

GovDelivery Listserv
- Biggest driver of traffic to the Spotlight webpage

Twitter Strategy
- Use Hootsuite to post Tweets during **high-traffic times** (9am, 12pm, 5pm)
- Maximize the use of **embedded images** as often as possible
- Use **embedded links** to drive traffic to the *Health, United States* webpage
- Use hashtags often, and **embed hashtags** into Tweets to save characters
- Encourage relevant agencies to promote the infographic **(cross-promotion)**

VISUALIZATION FINDINGS

Process
- Development, production, and review spanned **six months**
- Required **coordinated effort** of offices across the National Center for Health Statistics
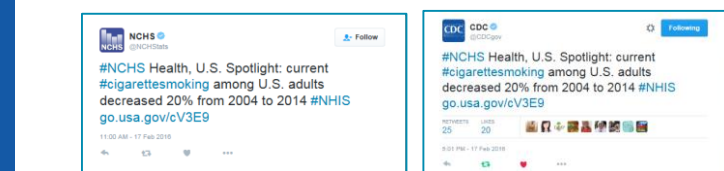
Product Effectiveness
- During the first week of the Winter Spotlight's release, **1,777 visitors** to the Spotlight webpage downloaded the infographic **825 times**.
- On the day of publication, traffic to the *Health, United States* webpage **increased 58.2%** compared to the previous week and **increased 43.4%** compared to the previous year-to-date.

Twitter Reach
- Tweets about the Winter Spotlight received **2,882 impressions and 55 engagements** during the first week of its release.
- Tweets with **embedded images** received, on average, more impressions and engagements.

	Average Impressions	Average Engagements
With image	343.3	10.5
No image	251.5	2.2
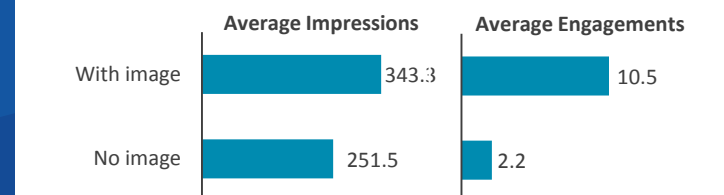
- **Cross-promotion** with @CDCgov increased impressions and engagements.

CONTACT

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www.cdc.gov | Contact CDC at: 1-800-CDC-INFO or www.cdc.gov/info
The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

National Center for Health Statistics
Office of Analysis and Epidemiology