

## TOPLINE MESSAGES

- Heart attack and stroke are two of the leading causes of death and disability in the United States, making cardiovascular disease responsible for 1 of every 3 deaths in the country.
- Together, heart attack and stroke are among the most widespread and costly health problems facing the nation, accounting for \$444 billion in health care expenditures and lost productivity in 2010 alone.
- It is also the leading cause of disparities in life expectancy among different races.
- This is particularly tragic because we know that most heart attacks and strokes can be prevented with simple, low-cost care available to us today. Too many people who need that preventive care don't get it. We can do better, and we must.
- Million Hearts™ is a public-private initiative led by CDC and CMS to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the U.S. over the next five years by focusing the nation on evidence-based community and clinical prevention actions.
- We call the clinical interventions the ABCS. That's **aspirin** for those who need it, **blood pressure** control and **cholesterol** management, and quitting **smoking**.
- The community interventions are equally important, and are about empowering Americans to make healthy choices such as improving nutrition and reducing excess sodium, a major contributor to high blood pressure.
- The entire Department of Health and Human Services is already working to improve the care people receive so that patients can spend more time with their doctors, and so that their doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other

health professionals can work with each other and with patients, families, and caregivers to provide the very best team-based care.

- We are also working to improve the ways doctors, hospitals, and insurers measure the ABCS, and focus on them when aligning incentives. The Department is also working to fully deploy health information technology to report and improve ABCS performance, and to support innovations in Care Delivery to improve adherence and control of ABCS.
- But we know we can't do it alone. We have an unprecedented commitment from partners across the government, and across society, to put those tools to use like never before.
- And we look forward to working with you. Please sign the pledge at <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov> and join us in our efforts to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the next five years.