

Director of the Division of Population Health

Craig Thomas, PhD, MS

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion



Role at CDC

Dr. Craig Thomas is the director of the Division of Population Health in CDC’s National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. In this role, he directs a broad portfolio of cross-cutting programs and applied research activities aimed at preventing chronic disease, reducing health disparities, and improving population health across the lifespan. Program areas include Alzheimer’s disease, arthritis, healthy aging, epilepsy, lupus, excessive alcohol use, healthy tribes, SDOH, and applied epidemiology and prevention research. In addition, Dr. Thomas oversees the collection

and reporting of population health data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System as well as small area estimates of chronic disease conditions and risk factors through PLACES.

Previous experience

Dr. Thomas joined CDC in 1998, serving in leadership positions for a variety of public health programs including CDC's HIV and AIDS Prevention Program, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program, National Public Health Accreditation, and the PHHS Block Grant. In addition, he has participated in CDC's emergency responses to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, as well as the COVID-19 response.

Dr. Thomas brings over 35 years of experience working with state, local, and tribal health departments, academia, health care and behavioral health providers, national partner organizations, and other federal agencies to address the underlying determinants of health, reduce health disparities, and drive improvements in population health and well-being.

Education

Dr. Thomas began his public health career in Southern California, where he earned a PhD in social psychology and applied research methods from Claremont Graduate University, an MS in developmental psychology from California State University Fullerton, and a BA in biological sciences from the University of California Irvine.

May 15, 2024

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