Due to a myriad of variables, including active discrimination, isolation, fear and irrational cultural beliefs, individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) are routinely denied access to quality health care. Those with ID are put at an increased risk for suffering needlessly from chronic pain and disease, blindness, hearing loss, premature deaths and numerous other easily preventable health conditions.

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania’s Role:**

Special Olympics is the largest global public health organization dedicated to serving people with ID. Our impact, in some cases, saves lives by discovering unknown health issues or providing health care that otherwise would not be available.

**Solutions and Benefits:**

- From 2011 to 2019, Special Olympics PA has conducted over 7,100 screenings, including nearly 2,000 at 5 events in 2019!
- For some, these screenings are the first time they have ever seen a doctor.
- Special Olympics “Healthy Communities” programs build on the success of Healthy Athletes to further improve the health status and increase access to community health resources for athletes with ID.

The public believes that people with intellectual disabilities have better health care than the general population...

...but levels of disease and preventable health conditions are significantly higher for those with intellectual disabilities.

- Untreated Tooth Decay: 31%
- Failed Hearing Tests: 30%
- Urgent Dental Referral Required: 10%
- Need New/Different Eyeglasses: 30%
- Low Bone Density: 27%

(Data from Special Olympics Pennsylvania Healthy Athletes, 2016 - 2019)

For more information, contact Director, Program Initiatives at chammell@specialolympicspa.org or call 610-630-9450 ext. 233.