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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN FRANKLIN COUNTY ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS



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Apalachicola, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Franklin County recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and acknowledges the 2017 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local governments, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Franklin County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Franklin County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The current plan, published in August 2016, addresses many of the public health issues associated with county health ranking measures. The department has partnered with local stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress. CHIP partners utilize health outcome data as well as community health surveys collected from Franklin County citizens to select goals.

“Community health is a county-wide responsibility”, said Franklin County Commissioner Noah Lockley. “Working together, we will make Franklin County a healthier place to live, learn, work and play.”

With less than one year since the start of a new CHIP, successful strides have been made in both project implementation and partnership growth. An early initiative was the creation of a Gulf/Franklin Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resource Guide. This guide was intended to connect residents in need and continues to be utilized in our communities.

Another ongoing project initiative involves collaborating with local Early Childhood Education Centers (ECEs) to enhance healthy eating and physical activity standards within their organizations. In Franklin, to date, three ECEs have incorporated goals from the Let’s Move! Child Care Campaign, which focuses five healthy areas: nurturing healthy eaters, providing healthy beverages, increasing physical activity, limiting screen time and supporting breastfeeding.

“CHIP Partners have identified the following priorities which impact our community: Healthy Weight, Access to Care, Substance Abuse and Mental Health. As a faith-based community partner, I am proud of the collaboration of grass-roots organizations, businesses, healthcare agencies, and governmental entities to improve the health of Franklin County,” said Pastor Harolyn Walker, Covenant Word Christian Center International.

“We all have a role to play in improving the health of our communities”, said Marsha Lindeman, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Gulf and Franklin Counties. “In public health, our role is to orchestrate the collaboration among community partners to improve health outcomes. I encourage you all to join the next CHIP workshop as we strive to make Franklin County a healthier place for our citizens and for generations to come.”

The next CHIP workshop is scheduled for April 27, 2017 from 10:30 am – 12:00 pm EST at the Franklin County Public Health Library-Carrabelle Branch Location.

Last week the Florida Department of Health celebrated a one-year milestone as the first integrated department of health in the nation to achieve national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. The seal of accreditation signifies that the Florida Department of Health has been rigorously examined and meets or exceeds national standards that promote continuous quality improvement for public health.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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