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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN COLLIER COUNTY ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS



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Naples, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged 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. Collier County is proud to rank as the 2nd healthiest county in Florida for the 4th year in a row.

"It is no surprise that Collier remains one of the healthiest counties to live in Florida. We enjoy great weather year-round, have access to beautiful beaches and parks, have a robust healthcare system, opportunities to participate in community-wide health initiatives, enjoy low crime rates, and our children attend a healthy school system," says Stephanie Vick, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Collier County. "We will continue to work collaboratively throughout our community to assure that Collier County is the healthiest place to live, work, and play."

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 Collier County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care. The rankings can be viewed at www.CountyHealthRankings.org.

In Collier County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress.

The Collier County Leadership for Community Health Improvement Planning committee is comprised of several community partners, including those from the Collier County Public Schools, Collier County Medical Society, Chamber of Commerce, NCH Safe and Healthy Children's Coalition, and local healthcare systems and agencies. Last year, the committee focused on reducing obesity and will continue to do so this year again.

In efforts to reduce obesity in Collier County, “Kids on the Go” was developed in conjunction with the Safe and Healthy Children’s Coalition and Collier County Public Schools to encourage children to exercise and adhere to a healthier lifestyle. Children run 26.2 miles in a 10 to 12 week period. 5,760 children have participated since the program’s 2012 inception. During the course of the program, students build endurance, increase self-confidence, and embrace the healthy lifestyle principles. Staff at participating schools report the program also has a positive impact on behavior and attention.

Beginning in 2017, in addition to reducing obesity, the committee has added behavioral health as a second area of focus. This addition came after reviewing the results of the latest Collier County Community Health Assessment. In doing so, the David Lawrence Center has joined the Leadership for Community Health Improvement Planning committee. Furthering outreach within the community is demonstrative of DOH-Collier’s commitment to the overall well-being of its residents.

“Collier County enjoys the longest life expectancy in America whereas the rest of the nation’s life expectancy has decreased. We also are the healthiest and happiest metropolitan statistical area according to the Gallop Healthways Well-Being Index. All of these facts reflect a community where everyone is encouraged to live a longer, happier, and healthier life,” according to Dr. Allen Weiss, President and CEO of the NCH Healthcare System.

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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