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COLLIER COUNTY RANKS SECOND HEALTHIEST COUNTY IN FLORIDA

Contact:
Kristine Hollingsworth
Kristine.Hollingsworth@flhealth.gov
239-252-8228

Naples, Fla. — For the sixth year in a row, Collier County has been ranked the second healthiest county in Florida. The Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and acknowledges the 2019 County Heath Rankings & Roadmaps tools released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study uses established figures and data from 2017 and beyond to highlight the many community factors that influence health, much of which is available from the department at www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

“It is no surprise that Collier remains one of the healthiest counties to live in Florida. Our rankings are a result of the community making healthy changes in their lives”, says Stephanie Vick, Administrator, DOH-Collier. “The decisions our residents make, along with the dedicated work of a variety of stakeholders, impacts the health of our entire community. 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 with many community partners. DOH-Collier 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.

“This is great news, once again, for Collier County! Blue Zones Project – SWFL, like so many of our health and well-being partners, value these reports as they help guide our work. We have many reasons to celebrate, but the rankings also help us identify where we need to improve,” states Deb Logan, Executive Director, Blue Zones Project-SWFL. “For example, although our smoking and obesity rates are even lower than the top performing counties throughout the nation and our percentage of women who receive mammography screening is higher than average, our alcohol impaired driving deaths and teen births are considerably higher than the top performing counties. Of particular concern is 22% of people living in Collier County are uninsured and 22% of our children are living in poverty. With continued county-wide collaboration, we can do better.”

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.
Our high ranking reflects our attention to the many factors that affect residents' health and our emphasis on sustaining our programs as we work to stay healthy. DOH-Collier recently partnered with the community of Everglades City to initiate the first Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE-EH) project in Collier County. PACE-EH is an evidence-based, community health assessment framework that is used to identify needs within a community's built and natural environment and create an action plan to address them. Healthy Communities recognized City of Naples and Collier County as Healthy Community Champions. Ranked 2 of 46 Florida communities recognized, the two governments have implemented over 80 best practices for policies in public health, physical activity and improved nutrition. The Collier County Board of Commissioners approved a Complete Streets Resolution, a policy that ensures that streets are for all people and modes of transportation, with roadways designed for the safety and convenience of drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians alike of all ages and abilities. DOH-Collier is committed to promoting tobacco free beaches as a way to create a healthy beach experience for ALL to enjoy. Suggestive signage will help reduce second hand smoke, beach litter, and environmental dangers to birds, fish, and other marine animals.

DOH-Colaer is also conducting their own survey of residents via the 2019 Community Health Survey. The purpose of this survey is to obtain the public’s insight regarding the health of our community. Information gathered from this survey will identify top priorities, which will drive future developments of local initiatives and services to address the thoughts, opinions and concerns of each resident.

Examples such as these reflect the value of the data in the county health rankings and the commitment of Collier County community leaders, who will continue to address specific opportunities for improved health outcomes for our residents. Through the Community Health Improvement Plan, collaborators like Collier County Public Schools, NCH Healthcare System, David Lawrence Center, Blue Zones Project, Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, Collier County Parks and Recreation and many others, work collaboratively to address issues related to the overall health of the community.

To view the County Health Rankings, visit www.countyhealthrankings.org. To explore more health indicators in your county, visit www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

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