

NEWS RELEASE
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Douglas County leaders to review Community Health Plan

(Lawrence, KS) – Douglas County soon will have its first Community Health Plan.

Nearly 100 residents have participated in five work groups that have been meeting since fall to develop goals and strategies for improving health in Douglas County. Their work has revolved around five priority issues that were identified during a Community Health Assessment that was completed one year ago. Those issues are:

- Access to healthy foods
- Access to health services
- Mental health
- Physical activity
- Poverty and jobs

On April 23, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department will convene a special meeting for members of the work groups, Community Health Improvement Partnership, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Board and media to review the Community Health Plan. The Health Department will recognize participants of the work groups for their contributions and a few participants will share their early success stories.

Additionally, Health Department leaders will discuss how individuals, groups and policymakers can take action to help meet health goals. For example, offer healthy food options in vending machines and restaurants, provide health screenings in workplaces, create more recreational trails, and implement Mental Health First Aid among staff of primary care providers, educators, emergency workers and human resource managers. Organizations in both the public and private sector will be encouraged to sign a formal “Declaration of Commitment” that indicates their support for the plan as well as specific steps they will take to advance the goals of the plan.

The Community Health Plan will be published in May. The Health Department, in collaboration with the University of Kansas Work Group on Community Health and Development, will track the community’s progress on reaching goals. They are creating a website, so residents can view that information as well.

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