



Public Health
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Knox County Health Department

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Knox County is the 58th Moderately Healthy County In Illinois

Knox County, IL – Knox County ranks moderately healthy residents at 58th out of 102 Illinois counties, according to the annual *County Health Rankings*, released today by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

This is the second year of the *County Health Rankings*, the most comprehensive report of its kind to rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states by using a standard way to measure how healthy people are and how long they live. The *Rankings* helps everyone see how where people live, learn, work and play influence how healthy they are and how long they live. “The *Rankings* help support important work that already is going on in Knox County every day,” says Heidi Britton, Public Health Administrator for the Knox County Health Department. “The *Rankings* is another tool that shows us where we are doing well and areas where we still need to improve and act on health issues; at the local, county, and state level.”

“Knox County conducts a community health assessment and community health plan with partners and stakeholders every five years as part of our Health Communities Project” said Britton. “The *Rankings* help our community stakeholders in education, economic development, housing and other areas to understand how they contribute to improving health in our community.” “Our Community Health Improvement Plan identifies oral health and cardiovascular disease as health priorities. The *Rankings* show that Health Behaviors is an area we need to improve on and why our chosen priorities are so important,” Britton said.

The *Rankings*, available at www.countyhealthrankings.org, includes a snapshot of each county in Illinois. Researchers used five measures to assess the level of overall health or “health outcomes” for Illinois by county: the rate of people dying before age 75, the percent of people who report being in fair or poor health, the numbers of days people report being in poor physical and poor mental health, and the rate of low-birth weight infants.

The *Rankings* additionally look at health behavior, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment. Looking at health factors such as: rates of adult smoking, adult obesity, excessive drinking, and teenage births; uninsured adults, availability of primary care providers, and preventable hospital stays; high school graduation rates, adults who have attended college, children in poverty; and community safety; access to healthy foods and air pollution levels.

For more information, please visit www.countyhealthrankings.org.