Local Public Health Departments: Working Together to Protect You

Local public health departments are leaders in improving the health and well-being of our communities. The Kansas City region is served by 10 local health departments that work together to protect public health. These agencies help prevent disease, illness and injury, and positively impact the social, economic and environmental factors fundamental to good health.

Protecting you from health threats — the everyday and the exceptional.

Local public health departments guard against health threats, regardless of the source, and work to prevent disease outbreaks. Your local health department makes sure the tap water you drink, the restaurant food you eat and the air you breathe are all safe. It’s ready to respond to any health emergency — be it bioterrorism, SARS, West Nile Virus, pandemic influenza or an environmental hazard.

Educating you and your neighbors about health issues.

Local public health departments use public forums, school programs, health clinics, newsletters and Web sites to give you information that helps you make healthy decisions every day, like exercising more, eating right, quitting smoking or simply washing your hands to keep from spreading illness. During a public health emergency, your local health department provides important alerts and warnings to protect your health.

Providing healthy solutions for everyone.

Your local public health department offers the preventive care you need to avoid chronic disease and to help maintain your health. It provides flu shots for residents and helps mothers obtain prenatal care that gives their babies a healthy start. It also helps provide children with regular check-ups, immunizations, and good nutrition to help them grow and learn.
Local public health departments gather and analyze data on the community’s health to determine risks and problems. This information drives specific activities designed to control multiple threats: communicable and chronic diseases; outbreaks of illness spread through food, water or insects; biological, chemical and radiological hazards; and public health disasters.

Local public health departments connect people with personal health services, including preventive and health promotion services. They also advocate for development of needed programs and services in underserved populations and continuously monitor the quality and accessibility of public health services.

Your local public health department plays a vital role in developing new policies and standards that address existing and emerging challenges to your community’s health while enforcing a range of laws intended to keep you safe. Your local public health department is constantly working — through research and rigorous staff training — to maintain its unique expertise and deliver up-to-date, cutting-edge health programs.