



Measuring Health Status in Kansas

Central to an effective health assessment process is access to and review of reliable and sound public health data. Data elements which support a comprehensive health assessment process include a diverse set of indicators ranging from poverty and education measures to disease specific mortality and morbidity data. The Kansas public health system invests considerable time and resources to ensure data routinely collected through reliable sources are made available to partners. Kansas has implemented several key initiatives during the past five years (described below), which have been central to supporting the health assessment process.

Health Assessment Data: The Core and Universal Indicators

In 2008, Kansas was one of 16 states selected to participate in the third phase of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement (MLC). The third phase of the learning collaborative consisted of 11 teams assembled from across Kansas representing state, regional and local perspectives, including a team representing

the state health department. The KDHE team concentrated its work on the topic of community health assessment, focusing specifically on how KDHE could remove existing barriers to accessing routinely collected data and package and promote the data in a more targeted way to better support partners in conducting health assessments.

As the project progressed, the team expanded its focus beyond KDHE data sets and collected indicators to represent a more diverse set of measures required to support a comprehensive community health assessment process. The team engaged the Kansas Health Institute to assist in developing a core and universal set of health indicators. The team engaged local health department staff to provide feedback on the usefulness of the proposed indicators to support the health assessment process. And while the number of indicators included in the core has increased since the set was initially released in 2011, these early indicators served as the foundation on which the Kansas Health Matters website was developed.

Enhancing Access to Reliable Health Indicators: Kansas Health Matters

Kansas Health Matters brings community health-related statistical data, local resources and a wealth of information to one accessible, user-friendly website. The data are obtained from multiple sources and are updated whenever their sources are, providing the most up-to-date information of its kind. Information is available for each county, for regions and for the state. The site is intended to help hospitals, health departments, community groups, schools, health associations, chambers of commerce, tourism, community members, policy makers and many other organizations learn about the health of the community and how to improve it. In addition

to state and local health data, the site provides resources, promising best practices, news articles and information about community events related to important community health issues. The site specifically aims to support the development of community health assessments and community health improvement plans by hospitals and local health departments, but its content is relevant for anyone interested in how to assess and improve the health of communities. For more information about Kansas Health Matters and for a complete overview of the indicators included on this site, please visit kansashealthmatters.org.

KANSAS HEALTH Matters

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ABOUT THIS SITE

Kansas Partnership for Improving Community Health
 Kansas Health Matters is a one stop source of non-biased data and information about community health in Kansas. It is intended to help hospitals

Community Health Needs Assessment Toolbox
 Don't reinvent the wheel. Click on the category below for the tools and resources you seek.

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Prioritizing Healthy People Topic Areas: Healthy Kansans 2020 Public Opinion Survey

Healthy People 2020 contains 42 topic areas and nearly 1,200 objectives. While all topic areas, objectives and measures are important and warrant attention, the volume of work and resources required to thoroughly review each of these topics is prohibitive. To prioritize the Healthy People 2020 topics, Kansas public health professionals, stakeholders and members of the general public participated in an electronic opinion survey in 2010.

The opinion survey was implemented using a convenience sample and distributed through multiple delivery mechanisms (social media, list serve and kiosks at state conferences). While the sampling methods differed, comparisons were still possible between the opinion survey implemented in 2010 and a similar survey implemented as part of the Healthy Kansans process in 1992. This comparison provided unique insight into how Kansans' understanding of health issues, risk and protective factors and priorities has changed during the past 20 years.

Paring down the 42 topic areas of Healthy People 2020 to a more manageable 12 was the first step in the state health assessment process. The 1,700 respondents to the 2010 survey prioritized a subset of Healthy People 2020 topics, objectives and measures upon which partners in Kansas could focus their energy.

12 Healthy Kansans 2020 Prioritized Topic Areas

1. Chronic diseases
2. Access to care
3. Lifestyle behaviors
4. Social factors affecting health
5. Environment
6. Health issues affecting mothers, infants and children
7. Mental health issues
8. Health issues among Kansans living with disabilities
9. Violence
10. Oral (dental) health
11. Injury and safety
12. Infectious diseases

For more information about the Healthy Kansans 2020 public opinion survey and for complete survey results, please visit the Healthy Kansans 2020 website at healthykansans2020.org.

Data Review: Overview of the 12 Healthy Kansans 2020 Topic Areas

KDHE epidemiologists and program staff began compiling data to support the state health assessment process in 2012. The data review that follows is organized around the 12 topic areas prioritized by stakeholders through the Healthy Kansans 2020 public opinion survey. Each of the topic areas includes a collection of specific indicators selected by KDHE epidemiologists and program staff based on their relevance to the broader topic and their role in driving mortality, morbidity, prevalence, cost and/or a reduced quality of life.

