



Overview of the Process

Promoting, protecting and ensuring the health of the public requires collective investment, action and state and broad community effort. As far back as the Roman Empire, public health measures involved the community-at-large and were a concern of the state as well as other institutions (e.g., churches, early medical facilities).

Through the ages and today, that tradition has lived on through the involvement of voluntary health organizations, foundations, academic institutions, civic organizations, health systems, schools, elected officials and an array of other public and private establishments in public health vision, planning, implementation and assessment. Each has an important role in public health, whether it is in: conducting research; developing, implementing and evaluating programs; educating the public; mobilizing individuals and groups to action; advocating for issues; reaching those at risk; monitoring trends; providing funding; and/or assessing policy decisions.

Public health practitioners have long recognized that optimizing impact truly relies on substantial investment in and ownership of a shared vision and plan for optimal health and well-being of a

population. Public health at its very essence is what society as a whole can do to assure the health of its people (Institute of Medicine, 2003).

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) works with local public health systems, agencies and organizations across the state daily in fulfilling its role to promote and protect Kansans' health. We are deeply sensitive to the importance of engaging our stakeholders and constituents in thoughtful deliberation and participatory planning to create and refine the Kansas Health Improvement Plan (KHIP) and to keep it on course with very clear destinations. We believe this inclusive process is our state's guide for determining:

- What is most important to achieve to have the greatest impact on those most vulnerable (establishing priorities)
- How best to leverage resources; and
- Visible accountability in the form of measurable objectives – defining and committing to clearly understood roles and responsibilities in implementation and tracking progress toward accomplishing objectives.

The KHIP is our state’s road map, the collectively defined means and end to achieving measurable outcomes and targets for health outcomes that will have the greatest positive impact on Kansans in the next six years. The KHIP has been built upon our community assessment and Healthy Kansans 2020 themes and priorities, Kansas health assets and resources and evidence-based strategies to guide strategies, objectives and activities across the state. The measurable objectives are our targets and reaching them will mean that indeed the health of Kansans has improved. These objectives build upon current momentum and efforts across the state. The KHIP aligns with existing strategic plans and is

designed to inspire partners to adopt agreed upon and clearly defined objectives and implement the evidence-based strategies to ensure the full positive impact of such objectives.

The KHIP is our state’s public health roadmap to our best near future – building on our successes, learning from what hasn’t worked well, tackling our biggest challenges and obstacles, especially those affecting Kansans who are among the most vulnerable, and effectively leveraging federal, state and local resources. KHIP reflects the hard work, focus and commitment of thousands of stakeholders who are dedicated to improving the health of all Kansans.

