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### **Draft of the Community Health Improvement Plan now online; Public invited to comment**

The draft of the Community Health Improvement Plan is now available on the Health Department's Web site ([www.kanehealth.com](http://www.kanehealth.com)) and the Department is seeking comments and feedback on the plan from the public through the month of February.

The 2012-2016 Kane County Community Health Improvement Plan reflects the understanding that the quality of the communities where we live, work, and play is as important to achieving good health as going to the doctor for regular checkups, proper nutrition, and adequate physical activity. There are many factors that affect our health and have a tremendous influence on health outcomes. The physical environment, social and economic factors, and clinical care all play a role in an individual's health and are all incorporated into the plan.

The Community Health Improvement Plan was developed based on the results of the Community Health Assessment. Throughout 2011, the health department, in partnership with the five hospitals in the county, the Fox Valley United Way, the United Way of Elgin, and the INC Board, jointly funded and led the collection of social, economic, health and other data to better understand the health of our community. For the first time, over 1,500 adults were surveyed about their health. The survey also asked 420 adults about the health of a child in their home. The assessment also included a number of public meetings and focus groups to gather input directly from residents. All of the data and information collected through the assessment is also included in the plan and is accessible through the website.

"This is truly the community's plan, designed to be implemented by community agencies, partners, and residents across the county," said Paul Kuehnert, Executive Director of the Kane County Health Department. "Working together, we can promote *Healthy People, Healthy Living, Healthy Communities* in Kane County and reach our vision of having the healthiest residents in Illinois."

(More)

The assessment led to the identification of six top threats to community health across Kane County. The threats are 1.) Obesity, 2.) Chronic Diseases, 3.) Infant Mortality, 4.) Childhood Lead Poisoning, 5.) Communicable Disease, 6.) Poor Social & Emotional Wellness. The Plan recommends a focus on 4 priority areas and 16 evidence-based strategies to address these top health issues over the next five years. The Plan establishes a framework for community organizations, employers, municipalities, schools, residents and others to work towards improving the health of our communities.

The Community Health Improvement Plan aligns with the County's update to the 2040 Plan which recognizes and emphasizes the connection between the most important resource in Kane County – its people – with the opportunities and barriers for healthy living created by the built and natural environment, and how together they shape the overall health of communities. The 2040 Plan will be the first Kane County Plan to integrate planning for community health with land use and transportation issues. This new approach was formalized by the Kane County Board in October 2010 through the adoption of the *2040 Conceptual Land Use Strategy Report*. Kane County is a nationally recognized leader in the integration of these planning efforts.

Residents are encouraged to review the draft Community Health Improvement Plan and submit comments, questions, and feedback by February 29. These can be submitted by emailing [health@kanehealth.com](mailto:health@kanehealth.com).

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