

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN SANTA ROSA COUNTY
ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS**

Milton, FL – The Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the sixth annual County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at www.floridacharts.com.

“We continue to make improvements that are moving health forward in Santa Rosa,” said Sandra L. Park-O’Hara, A.R.N.P., administrator of DOH-Santa Rosa. “We are currently addressing the health issues noted in last year’s rankings in our Community Health Improvement Plan. We continue to work with our community partners and the community at large in addressing those identified challenges and changes.”

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local governments, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Santa Rosa County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Santa Rosa County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress.

Efforts being made to address the issue of Healthiest Weight include the National Diabetes Prevention Program offered by DOH-Santa Rosa. The program offers a proven approach to preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes through modest lifestyle changes made with the support of a trained lifestyle coach and others enrolled in the program. Participants learn how to eat healthy, add physical activity to their routines, manage stress, stay motivated and solve problems that can get in the way of healthy changes. Classes meet once a week for 16 weeks, then once a month for six months to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. The program has been very successful.

“The first time we presented the program it was very successful,” said Barbara McMillion, R.N., director of nursing for DOH-Santa Rosa. “Twenty-two residents completed the first class and before we even had a date for the second class there were 13 on a waiting list. We decided to

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hold two classes for the session that started March 2—one in the evening and one during the lunch hour. Both classes are full.”

Martha Zimmermann, chair of the Tobacco-Free Santa Rosa Coalition, said, “We know that health behaviors, such as tobacco use, affect the overall health of our communities. This is an issue that was identified in the rankings in previous years and in our CHIP, as well. Fortunately, we have a strong coalition of community partners working together to address the issue and we are confident we will see improvement in this area as we move forward.”

“Emergency management is proud to be a partner to the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County,” said Daniel Hahn, plans chief and citizen Corps/CERT coordinator for Santa Rosa County Emergency Management. “Their dynamic, forward thinking, community oriented programs and policies allow this partnership to thrive and be the best it can be for the citizens of Santa Rosa County. Throughout the community there are programs in place to make Santa Rosa a safer and healthier place to live, and the county health department is instrumental in the success of many of them. They are great partners, and we are proud of this achievement.”

“The Santa Rosa County Community Health Improvement Steering Committee has been formed, with organized committees to deal with each of the key health priorities,” said David Sjöberg, chair of the Santa Rosa County Community Health Improvement Steering Committee. “The composition of the Steering Committee reflects extraordinary cooperation and willingness to work collaboratively in developing plans to address priorities.”

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