

Mission:

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



Rick Scott
Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN LAFAYETTE AND SUWANNEE COUNTIES
ADDRESS COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS**

LIVE OAK – The Florida Department of Health in Lafayette and Suwannee counties 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 are delighted to have a very active relationship with our community partners. Through collaborative efforts, we can engage our clients, consumers and community members in healthy habits be it exercise, weight loss, diabetic care, emergency preparedness, prenatal care and other wellness initiatives. We value that partnership,” stated Mr. Kerry S. Waldron, administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Lafayette and Suwannee counties.

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, healthcare facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Suwannee County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Lafayette and Suwannee Counties, 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. The Lafayette Health Improvement Partnership and the Suwannee Health Advisory Group (SHAG) meet bi-monthly at the Florida Department of Health in Lafayette and Suwannee counties to address community health needs. One recent initiative that addresses issues included in the county health rankings is the 2014 Lafayette and Suwannee Biggest Loser Competition, which resulted in 12 teams comprised of local businesses and community groups losing a total of 369.2 pounds of weight in a 12-week period as well as the city of Live Oak being recognized as a Champion for Healthiest Weight.

Catherine Rogers from the University of Florida stated, “I have been offering the diabetes self-management educational (DSME) program, Take Charge of Your Diabetes (TCYD), for several years now, which costs \$75.00, but being involved in SHAG has made me aware that there is a great need to offer other, more affordable forms of DSME, which I intend to do very soon. One success story: Due to a partial scholarship sponsored by a local church organization networking with SHAG, one Suwannee County resident who would have otherwise not been able to afford the TCYD course has been helped to reduce her risk for complications associated with diabetes.”

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The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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