

---

HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
NEWS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 26, 2018

**For additional information contact:**

Rachel Jantz (616) 632-7241 or [Rachel.Jantz@KentCountyMi.gov](mailto:Rachel.Jantz@KentCountyMi.gov)

## **Kent County Community Health Needs Assessment Identifies Key Health Priorities**

**GRAND RAPIDS** - The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) has completed its most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identifying the community's most pressing health concerns, according to its residents. The top health concerns were mental health, substance use disorders, obesity and poor nutrition. These issues remain largely unchanged from the previous survey. The CHNA is conducted every three years in Kent County with funding support from KCHD and our local health care system partners, Mary Free Bed, Mercy Health, Metro Health, Pine Rest and Spectrum Health.

KCHD through its initiative, Healthy Kent, and other partners will utilize this information to refine a detailed Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). "Through the community health improvement planning process, we work to enhance and expand current initiatives within the community and develop new strategies, if needed, to address the top health concerns," shared Rachel Jantz, Epidemiologist at Kent County Health Department. "Our community partnerships continue to grow."

The information was collected over the past year through health surveys conducted by KCHD and key community collaborators. Nearly 6,200 people participated in the multi-faceted health assessment which includes the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a community health survey and community engagement strategies. This year, KCHD partnered with the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University to assist in the development and implementation of the VoiceKent survey. The partnership allowed expanded data collection for both agencies.

"The CHNA provides a great profile of multiple factors that influence population health," said Barb Hawkins Palmer, Executive Director of Healthy Kent. "Now we will begin the process of sharing those findings and using this information to promote a healthy community for all."

The assessment is available at [https://www.accesskent.com/Health/pdf/2017KC\\_CHNA.pdf](https://www.accesskent.com/Health/pdf/2017KC_CHNA.pdf)

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit [www.accesskent.com/health](http://www.accesskent.com/health).

---

HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
NEWS RELEASE



KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit [www.accesskent.com/health](http://www.accesskent.com/health).

700 FULLER AVE. NE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503