Clay County Shows Health Improvement in County Health Rankings*

The University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently released the 6th Annual County Health Rankings for 2015. The annual County Health Rankings measure important health factors that influence health outcomes, including high school graduation rates, obesity, smoking, unemployment, access to healthy foods, air and water quality, and income inequality. Healthier counties typically have higher education and graduation rates, better access to health care, better access to nutritious food, and greater access to recreational opportunities. Counties that are typically the least healthy have lower educational levels, higher smoking rates, lack access to health care, and have greater income inequality among its residents. Clay County improved in its rank in Missouri during 2014. Clay County ranks 9th best in health outcomes and 6th best in health factors. The annual rankings provide a revealing snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, work, and play.

“There are many factors that influence our healthy rankings here in Clay County,” said Gary E. Zaborac, Director of Public Health. “A vibrant local public health system which includes excellent local public schools, a strong economy, access to high quality health care services, and access to a variety of recreational and cultural opportunities which enhance the quality of life in Clay County. Clay County is also blessed with a number of ongoing collaborative efforts across many boundaries which also make many of these health outcomes possible.” Zaborac added that the challenge to communities and their leadership is to continue to move forward so our existing higher quality of life will not only continue but also improve in all areas.

*County Health Rankings provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and University of Wisconsin include comparisons of 114 Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis. Health outcomes represent how healthy a county is and Health Factors represent how healthy a county will be in the future.