SANFORD, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole) recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the 2018 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.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

“We are excited to continue to rank among the top 5 counties in Florida for Health Outcomes and Health Factors. The many initiatives, programs and partnerships we have in Seminole County are helping to improve the health of our community,” said Donna Walsh, health officer for the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County. “We are collectively impacting social determinants of health and seeing improvements in health behaviors, clinical care and social and economic factors.”

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with all 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 Seminole County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Seminole County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improving 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 in priority areas such as chronic disease, health literacy and access to care, behavioral health (mental and substance abuse) and maternal and child health.

In collaboration with the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office, DOH-Seminole facilitates the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) to deliver positive youth development workshops to teenagers throughout the county empowering them to make positive choices. The 2018 County Health Rankings show an improvement in teen births throughout the years proving that bringing resources together for programs such as TOP makes a difference in health behaviors. In addition, the department offers a Teen Choices Clinic to deliver age appropriate, culturally sensitive health education and reproductive health services to teens.

Seminole County has strengths in the areas of Health Behaviors with adult smoking, adult obesity, food environment, access to exercise opportunities and teen births where it ranked 10th.
out of 67 counties, and Clinical Care with uninsured, preventable hospital stays, diabetes monitoring and mammography screenings where it ranked 5th out of 67 counties.

While we ranked high overall, this report helps us identify areas where we must work harder such as improving health behaviors which impact sexually transmitted infections, alcohol-impaired driving deaths and excessive drinking. The further advancement of the physical environment is also important, especially in areas such as driving alone to work.

“Collaborations have a significant impact in Seminole County. This year clinical care ranked 5th and social and economic factors ranked 2nd. The Community Paramedicine program identifies individuals at risk for unmet clinical and social needs that may have been previously unnoticed. For example, food insecurity is ranked 13% in Seminole County compared to only 10% for top U.S. performers. Among other services, nutrition and dietary needs are checked by the community paramedic when initially assessing a new client,” said Ken Peach, executive director for the Health Council of East Central Florida.

To explore more health indicators in your county, visit www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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