



Report Released Detailing the Health of Denver Residents

March 27, 2012 – Detailed in the latest report on the health of Denver residents, improvements have been made in two of the city's most common causes of death: cardiovascular disease and injury. “This shows that when we make a concerted effort to address problems like heart attacks and strokes or motor vehicle accidents, we can significantly improve health outcomes,” said Environmental Health Manager Doug Linkhart, whose department helped author the report.

Today, Linkhart and Denver Public Health Director Dr. Bill Burman released the results of the 2011 Denver Health Status Report. The release of this comprehensive community health assessment marks an important step towards creating a Community Health Improvement Plan for Denver, which will prioritize community health problems and will identify or continue specific action plans to make Denver the healthiest city in the nation.

"Denver has seen great success in a variety of public health issues," said Dr. Burman. "We know that through targeted interventions and emphasis on prevention, we can and have improved health in Denver. And yet, in many areas, we continue to fall short. We see great disparities among different Denver populations in access to health care and in rates of obesity, for example."

While consistently ranked one of the healthiest cities in the U.S., this snapshot of health in Denver suggests room for improvement. "I see this report as a call to action to our community," said Linkhart. "It's an assessment that gives Denver residents from all areas of the city an overview of the health of Denver, and with the release of this data, we're asking the community to participate in prioritizing our efforts to improve health. "

The 2011 Denver Health Status Report was presented today to the Health and Safety Committee of the Denver City Council, and is available online today to begin the stakeholder engagement process. The report highlights a number of health disparities among different populations in Denver, along with encouraging indicators of improvement.

Denver residents will have the opportunity to learn more about the community health assessment, and will be asked to weigh in on important questions regarding prioritization of complex health issues and to share their own ideas on improving Denver's overall health. Throughout 2012, this engagement process will be the basis for creating a Community Health Improvement Plan for Denver.

Over the past year, a core group of staff from Denver Public Health and Denver Environmental Health met with key experts and community stakeholders to produce the 2011 Denver Health Status Report. The assessment is divided into 14 topic areas, and demonstrates the impact of demographics and behavior on health.