

County Health Rankings - Press Release February 19, 2010

New York's counties are ranked on select health outcomes and health factors in a new report issued this week by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

The report ranks counties in New York and all other states on length of life, quality of life, health behaviors, health care access and quality, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

Wyoming County ranks 12th among New York State's sixty-two counties for overall health and 24th for health factors. "We are pleased with Wyoming County's standing in the report" said Gregory J. Collins, DO, MPH, Wyoming County Commissioner of Health. "The report reflects the ongoing collaborative efforts between various County Departments, physician practices and Community-based agencies that are a benefit of life in a rural community. We are uniquely accessible to each other across the continuum of care; achievements in health-related programming are always the result of collective efforts".

In the RWJF/University of Wisconsin county health rankings report, researchers combined five measures to develop a single score to rank counties on the level of overall health or "health outcomes":

- The rate of premature death (people dying before age 75);
- The percent of people who report being in fair or poor health;
- The number of days people report being in poor physical health;
- The number of days people report being in poor mental health; and,
- The rate of low birth-weight infants.

The report also combined another set of 23 factors that affect New Yorkers' health within four categories to develop a "health factors score" by which counties are ranked:

- **Health behaviors** (Includes measures of smoking, diet and exercise, alcohol use, and risky sex behavior.)
- **Clinical care** (Includes measures of access to health care and quality of care).
- **Social and economic factors** (Include measures of education, employment, income, family/social support, and community safety.)
- **Physical environment** (Includes measures of environmental quality and the built environment, such as access to sidewalks, park paths, recreational facilities, etc.)

Dr. Collins also stated that "while Wyoming County's overall standing is favorable, the report identified several areas that we need to collectively focus on moving forward including diabetic screening programs, obesity and smoking rates." The complete report may be accessed at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

For questions regarding this report or services available from the Wyoming County Health Department, please call (585) 786-8890.