



Carver County Public Health
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Carver is Healthiest County in Minnesota Six Years Running **2018 County Health Rankings Report Released**

Carver County ranks first in health outcomes and health factors according to 2018 County Health Rankings report, released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI). This is the sixth consecutive year Carver County has ranked first in health outcomes among all Minnesota counties.

In recent years Carver County has consistently scored well on health behavior measures, such as low teen birth rates, high physical activity rates, and access to healthy foods. Additionally, Carver County is ranked first out of all Minnesota counties on social and economic factors, such as high school graduation rates, and low unemployment and violent crime rates.

“The 2018 County Health Rankings reflect the diligent efforts of many partner organizations in advancing health in our community,” said Dr. Richard Scott, Carver County Public Health Department Manager. “While we celebrate the collective progress we have made, we recognize that some factors do not meet the goals we have set for our county. We are confident the commitment our community has shown to health and well-being for all residents will continue.”

The annual County Health Rankings (Rankings) provide an easy-to-use snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, learn, work and play. The Rankings data makes it clear that good health is influenced by many factors beyond medical care, including high school graduation rates, obesity, smoking, unemployment, air and water quality, teen births and more.

This year we took a closer look at excessive drinking rates among adults. Excessive drinking is the percentage of adults that report either binge drinking or heavy drinking. Excessive drinking is a risk factor for a number of adverse health outcomes and is the third leading lifestyle-related cause of death in the United States. Carver County’s excessive drinking rate continues to exceed the state average, and has the highest rate of excessive drinking in the Twin Cities metro region. Once again, Carver County exceeds the state average for alcohol-impaired driving deaths and also has the highest rate of alcohol-impaired driving deaths in the Twin Cities metro region.

The Rankings Key Findings Report shows meaningful gaps in health persist not only by place, but also by race and ethnicity. Additionally, it calls attention to key drivers of health, such as children in poverty. Poverty limits opportunity and increases the chance of poor health. The County Health Rankings reveal that 4 percent of children in Carver County live in poverty.

However, rates are higher among racial and ethnic groups; 15 percent of Hispanic children and 11 percent of Black children live in poverty in Carver County, while only 2 percent of white children live in poverty.

Our children will become more resilient and grow into stronger, healthier adults with greater economic opportunities if we maintain quality education, provide emotional and social support, promote access to quality health care, and build safe, affordable and stable housing.

“We will be an even healthier, thriving community when no population is left behind,” said Dr. Richard Scott, Carver County Public Health Department Manager. “We can work together to find solutions so that all babies, children, and adults – regardless of their race, ethnicity, or economic status – have the same opportunities to be healthy.”

Carver County Public Health supports various initiatives or programs meant to expand health equity. Health equity is where all persons – regardless of race, income, sexual orientation, age or gender – have the opportunities to reach their full health potential. Public Health’s Health Equity Data Analysis (HEDA) project involves using data to identify differences in health outcomes by population groups, and then considers not only the individual factors but also the high-level factors (e.g., policies and systems) that may create those differences. Findings from the HEDA project will be disseminated beginning in late spring 2018.

The HEDA project will guide future work plans and activities such as Public Health’s Community Health Improvement Plan or CHIP. The CHIP is designed to address specific opportunities to improve the health of the community. While Public Health partners with a variety of stakeholders to develop and implement the CHIP in Carver County, the County Health Rankings are an important springboard for conversations about where to begin.

The detailed 2018 County Health Rankings report is available at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

Carver County Public Health works to promote and protect the health of all of our residents, in order to make Carver County a place to live for a lifetime of good health.

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