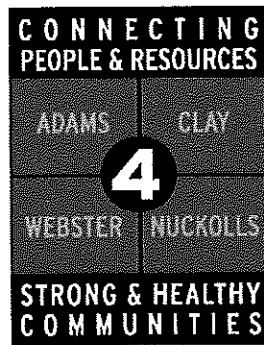


Attachment 12



Media Communication Materials

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
5800 S. UNIVERSITY AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637
TEL: 773-936-3700
WWW.CHEM.UCHICAGO.EDU

Attention: News Director

(June 1, 2007)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

(Public Health System Performance Assessment to be Held on June 13th)

Recent public health emergencies, such as the Greensburg, KS tornado and concerns about spreading tuberculosis on an international plane ride are two prime examples of Americans facing public health challenges in the 21st century. What public health issues will be concerns in our four-county area of Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties?

"In today's world, physicians, nurses, healthcare facilities and health departments are not the entire public health system," states Joyce Crawford, Executive Director of the South Heartland District Health Department. "A public health system is commonly defined as all public, private, and voluntary parties that contribute to the delivery of essential public health services. It also includes community centers, businesses, fire and emergency medical services, police, the faith community, parks and recreation, schools and so forth," says Crawford.

The four-county region will evaluate their public health system on Wednesday, June 13 from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm in the Adams County Fairgrounds Community Service Building. Along with public health system representatives, the public is invited to become involved. Participants may choose to attend the assessment all or part of the day. Lunch and refreshments will be provided throughout the day.

The results of the assessment will then be sent to the U.S. Center of Disease Control and Prevention to be analyzed and compared to national standards. Feedback will be used to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of the public health system in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties. Public health system representatives from the four counties will then be involved in future meetings to continue the discussion and develop a strategic plan to improve the health and quality of life in our region.

If you would like to participate in this assessment, please contact the South Heartland District Health Department by June 8th at 402-462-6211 or 877-238-7595 (toll free) to register.

* * * * *

FOR FUTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dixie Zoucha, South Heartland District Health Department
914 West 4th Street; Hastings, NE 68901
(402)462-6211 or (877)238-7595

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*Be a part of connecting people and
resources for strong, healthy
communities in Adams, Clay,
Nuckolls and Webster Counties!*

Hastings Tribune
June 2007

Plan to attend the
Local Public Health System
Performance Assessment
8:30 am to 4:00 pm

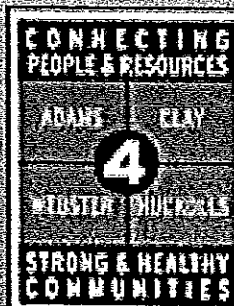
Wednesday, June 13, 2007
Adams County Fairgrounds
Community Service Building
947 S. Baltimore Avenue
Hastings, NE

You may attend all or part of the day
Lunch and refreshments will be provided

This assessment is being conducted to
determine how the public health
systems in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and
Webster Counties fares in comparison
to national standards

Our public health system includes all
public, private and voluntary entities
that contribute to the public's health
and well-being

RSVP required by June 6th
Contact the South Heartland
District Health Department at
402-462-6211 or
877-238-7595 (toll free)



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MAPP survey evaluates area health services

JOHN HUTHMACHER
johnh@hastingstribune.com

A five-part assessment evaluating public health services in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties will help direct public health strategies and planning in the coming years, a South Heartland District Health Department official said this week.

Dixie Zoucha, public health education coordinator at South Heartland, said the five-prong health assessment process, Mobilizing For Action Through Planning and Partnership, or MAPP, covers health services provided in the four counties.

"In talking about public health and what a public health system is, it is important to understand that the system is not just the health department," Zoucha said. "It's not just the hospital, doctors and clinics. The system actually encompasses much more than that: its schools, emergency management, business, communications, utilities...virtually everybody in our four-counties is part of the public health system."

Funded by the state through LB692, the MAPP process involves individual assessments of all 18 district health departments in the state. The idea behind the effort is to collect and evaluate data from multiple sources to determine those areas that are working and those that need the most attention.

In no particular order, the five areas of assessment include:

- 1) Local public health system performance assessment.
- 2) Local public health system governance performance assessment.
- 3) Forces of change.
- 4) Community Health status (ongoing).
- 5) Community themes and strengths.

The community themes and strengths survey can be accessed online at www.southheartland-health.org, or obtained in person at 914 W. Fourth Street. Residents must be at least 16 years of age to take the survey. Surveys are due in the middle of this month, Zoucha said.

Zoucha said she is hoping people will take the time to fill out the 30-question questionnaire, which is also available in Spanish. Its importance cannot be overstated, she said.

"Through this survey, we're getting information from as many people as we can," she said. "This is going to help us identify the most pressing issues we can address through community action."

Once data is compiled, a summary of the results will be made available online at the South Heartland web page, Zoucha said.

Preliminary feedback received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on three of the assessments — local public health performance, governance, and forces of change — gives South Heartland District high marks in most areas, Zoucha said. Official results are expected to be released in the coming weeks, she said.

"In most areas, we're doing very well," Zoucha said. "It kind of measures us on how we're doing on 10 essential services. We're pleased."

South Heartland rated highest in the area of developing policies and plans, Zoucha said. Its research and innovations mark was less than satisfactory, however.

Zoucha said the information provided will be assessed and incorporated in the district's five-year plan. For that reason, she hopes residents will make their opinions known by filling out the brief survey questionnaire.

"We really want a broad representation of the four counties," she said. "We want them to provide information for us because this is their views on how healthy our community is. This is one of the most important assessments we do."

Hastings Tribune
October 2007

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT!

Residents in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties are being asked to complete a short Community Health Survey to provide their opinions about community health challenges and strengths.

The results will be used by the South Heartland District Health Department and other organizations in the four counties to identify the most pressing issues which can be addressed through community action. All feedback is completely anonymous. To complete the survey, please go to www.southheartlandhealth.org and click on "Community Health Survey" under "Hot Topics". For more information, contact the South Heartland District Health Department at 462-6211 or 1-877-238-7595 (toll free).

THANK YOU!

Hastings Tribune
October 2007