

NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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Letter to the Editor:

With a few clicks of a mouse, you can help make your community better. Every three years, the Panhandle calls on local residents to complete the Community Health Survey to help better serve the communities of western Nebraska. The survey is a way for us to assess community health needs and direct our attention to what the people need.

The survey helps us to understand where the needs are and what the community would like us to focus on. By participating, you are letting us know what is important so we can continue making the Panhandle a great place to live.

The survey asks questions about access to medical care and mental health services, whether there is adequate housing, employment and public transportation, if your community is safe, if there is high quality child care and education, and if your local schools provide adequate programs for youth. It also looks at what residents believe are risky behaviors and health problems in your community as well as what are the biggest concerns for your community.

The information from the anonymous survey will be used to help develop the next Community Health Improvement Plan. The last plan included: creating walkable communities, reducing smoking and vaping, reducing adverse childhood experiences, offering Circle of Security parenting classes, creating healthier worksites, offering fall prevention for older adults, improving access to mental health and primary care, offering lifestyle change programs to reduce chronic disease, and increasing cancer screenings.

Agencies across the Panhandle work together on the plan. This includes area hospitals, Panhandle Public Health District, Panhandle Partnership, Scotts Bluff County Health Department, Panhandle Area Development District, community organizations, and more.

Putting the plan in action is important for area residents. Compared to the rest of the state, western Nebraska ranks high in child poverty, diabetes, and tobacco use, and low in cancer screenings.

There are three ways to complete the survey. You can visit <http://pphd.org/> and click on the link to the survey, go to Panhandle Public Health District's Facebook page, or fill out a paper copy at any of the hospital/clinics in the Panhandle. The survey takes 10 minutes to complete and is available in English and Spanish. The deadline to complete the survey is November 15th, 2019.

Thank you for providing your input!

Kim Engel
Director, Panhandle Public Health District

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Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.