



Press Release



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For Immediate Release

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Wichita County Rises in County Health Rankings

Wichita Falls, Texas- Wichita County has risen 5 spots in the 2023 County Health Rankings in the state of Texas.

The rankings are released by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. They provide a method for health officials to look at the overall picture of health in their county as compared to other counties across the state and nation. The rankings take in the various measures that affect health, such as high school graduation rates, smoking, obesity, teen births, and the number of primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health providers in a community.

Overall, Wichita County's "health outcomes" ranking improved from 119 in the state to 114 (244 counties included in Texas), based on a composite of length of life (157) and quality of life (83). Improvements in this category include declines in poor or fair health and poor physical health days. One challenge continues to be the premature death in Wichita County compared to the overall state (9,400 to TX-7,000), which is measured by the number of deaths converted to years of potential life lost rate. The leading causes of death continue to be cancer and diseases of the heart.

Some improvements were seen in the "health factors" (2022-76 to 2023-73) category, which is comprised of health behaviors (2022-167 to 2023-141), clinical care (2022-25 to 2023-33), social & economic factors (2022-110 to 2023-82) and physical environment (2022-46 to 2023-101). Improvements in physical inactivity (26%) and in adult obesity (37%) are of note, as well as a reduction in preventable hospital stays from 4,670 in 2022 to 4,081 in 2023. Observed challenges continue to be the percentage of adults who smoke (20%), the increased rate of sexually transmitted infections from 391.7 in 2022 to 428.8 in 2023, and the percentage of adults to report excessive drinking (20%).

Additional social & economic factors that are considered in the "health factors" category of importance are improvements in unemployment (2022-6.7% to 2023-5.3%) and a reduction in the percentage of children in poverty (2022-21% to 2023-19%), as well as a better high school completion rate in Wichita County in comparison to the state (88% to TX-85%).

The Wichita County Public Health District is proactive in identifying and addressing the issues facing the health and well-being of our community. Change will take citizens, as well as community leaders, working together to create opportunities to live a healthy life.

Complete Wichita County results can be found [here](#).

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