



PRESS RELEASE
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Report Provides Insights in Alachua County's Health Needs

GAINESVILLE, Fla.— The **2010 Alachua County Health Needs Assessment** is now available. The assessment presents health-related data, resident's perspectives on health and healthcare, and current and future health needs of Alachua County. The Alachua County Health Department partnered with CHOICES Health Services, North Florida Regional Medical Center, Shands HealthCare and Palms Medical Group to engage WellFlorida Council, the region's local health council, to create the assessment.

The assessment includes data on Alachua County such as demographic and socioeconomic factors, health status, healthcare access and utilization, prevalence of chronic diseases, leading causes of death and health disparities.

Four hundred telephone surveys to residents, 22 focus groups with 181 participants, and 40 structured interviews with key informants provided a range of perspectives from the community on health issues in the County.

Jeff Feller, WellFlorida's Chief Operating Officer, said the assessment will be used to bring about beneficial change to Alachua County.

"The assessment provides a snapshot of where we are now, which is a critical first step in determining the vision of where we need to be in terms of the health of Alachua County residents and the operation and performance of its health systems," said Feller.

Areas of concern for Alachua County include a per capita income 20-23% lower than the state average. Nearly 23% of residents—more than 56,000 people—are estimated to be in poverty.

According to the report, one out of every three Alachua County public school students was overweight or obese in 2008-09.

Additionally, health disparities are evident. Death rates for black residents of Alachua County are higher than their white counterparts in 6 of the 10 leading causes of death. Also, the cancer age-adjusted death rate is 20% higher for black residents than that of white residents.

To obtain an overview of the assessment, and/or the assessment and technical appendix, visit the Resources page at www.wellflorida.org.

WellFlorida's mission is to forge partnerships in planning, research and service that build healthier communities.

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