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Delaware Public Health Institute Releases First Household Health Survey Results
Access to care, chronic disease and social capital among key topics from the region's largest health survey

NEWARK—The influence of the Affordable Care Act, chronic disease and social capital are some of the key findings released today from the 2015 [Delaware Public Health Institute's](#) first Delaware Household Health Survey (HHS), which is modeled after [Public Health Management Corporation's](#) (PHMC) [Community Health Data Base biennial survey](#). This is a comprehensive health survey covering 2,609 randomly selected households (adults 18+) reached through cellphones and landlines in Kent County, Sussex County, The Greater Wilmington area, and the remainder of New Castle County.

“The Household Health Survey is a unique, one-of-a-kind local snapshot based on its sophisticated analysis of data at the regional, county and even smaller geographical levels,” said Francine Axler, Executive Director of Delaware Public Health Institute. “The first-of-its-kind 2015 survey data features information on health indicators such as chronic disease, access to care, mental health and substance abuse, insurance coverage and social capital.”

The majority of Delawareans are in excellent or very good health (83 percent), but nearly one in five adults are reportedly in fair or poor health. This statistic serves as a call to action across the state to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence health in order to improve overall health outcomes.

ACCESS TO CARE AND SERVICES

People who have a regular source of care are more likely to seek care when they are sick compared with those who do not. This allows people to receive earlier, less expensive treatment, get well more quickly and prevent costly complications.

- The majority of Delawareans (85 percent) have a regular source of care.
- Eighty-two percent of Delawareans use a private doctor's office as their regular source of care. This is consistent across all geographic regions.
 - The lowest percentage of private doctor office use was found in the Center City sub-region of Wilmington (76 percent) where more than one-third reported one or more visits to the Emergency Room in the past year.

INSURANCE COVERAGE AND COST BARRIERS

Delaware does not meet the national [Healthy People 2020](#) goals of 100 percent insurance coverage, with seven percent (59,600) of adults still uninsured. High costs continue to be an

issue among Delawareans. With or without health insurance, one in 10 adults were unable to get needed care due to cost and about 132,900 adults (14.5 percent) were prescribed medication but did not fill it due to cost.

- About 14 percent of adults in Delaware looked into purchasing health insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace
 - Two-thirds (66 percent) of them found it somewhat difficult or very difficult to find a plan they could afford to use and less than half (38 percent) enrolled.

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Health behaviors quite often directly impact and influence overall health outcomes.

- Approximately 18 percent of Delaware adults (18+) currently smoke. This percentage is higher than the national average (16.8 percent).
- Approximately 33 percent (281,321) of Delaware adults ages 18 and over are obese. This is slightly lower than the national average (35 percent).
 - Out of all the counties, Sussex County has the highest percentage of obesity (36 percent). The sub-region of Milford, within Sussex County has the highest obesity rates across all regions and counties, respectively.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Mental illness has wide-reaching effects on people's education, employment, physical health, and relationships.

- Nearly 17 percent of surveyed adults 18 and over have been diagnosed with a mental health condition, and 57,613 (37.4 percent) are not receiving treatment.
 - Delawareans with a diagnosed mental health condition are three times as likely to have a substance abuse problem.
- 123,000 adults surveyed (13.4 percent) report having four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) before they reached the age of 18.
 - Those with four or more ACEs are over five times as likely to have a substance abuse problem.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

The 2015 survey included a series of questions designed to assess social capital, or the expected collective or economic benefits derived from cooperation between individuals and groups. Topics such as how often individuals witness violence, how much trust they have their neighbors, access to safe outdoor space and fresh fruits and vegetables were included.

- Three in five (61 percent) of adults in Center City Wilmington report witnessing violence in their community on more than one occasion/many times. This percentage is nearly two and three times higher than any other sub-region.
 - The overwhelming majority of residents in Center City (90 percent) have access to a park or outdoor space in their neighborhood; however 21 percent still do not feel comfortable visiting the park during the day.

This information provides a glimpse into the types of issues captured by over 100 key health indicators, demographics, and custom geographic areas available in the DE HHS, which includes Kent County, Sussex County, The Greater Wilmington Area, and The Remainder of New Castle County.

The raw data files are accessible through DE Community Health Database (CHDB) membership for more in-depth multi-level analysis, program planning, and policy development. Please contact: info@delawarephi.org for more information.

About Delaware Public Health Institute

The Delaware Public Health Institute (DPHI) is a nonprofit in collaboration between founding partners Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC), Pennsylvania's public health institute, and the University of Delaware, College of Health Sciences (CHS). DPHI is the first and only public health institute in Delaware.

About Public Health Management Corporation's Community Health Data Base

[Public Health Management Corporation](#) (PHMC) is a nonprofit public health institute that creates and sustains healthier communities. The Community Health Data Base's (CHDB) mission is to drive data-led community impact for the well-being of the community. The CHDB addresses the increasingly important role of data in health care policy and decision making through tools like the biennial Household Health Survey. For more information, visit www.chdbdata.org.

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