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For Immediate Release

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Health department wants community input

How healthy is your community? If you live in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls or Webster counties in Nebraska, the South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD) wants your input.

“Please tell us what you think about the health of your community,” said executive director Michele Bever, “and help us to understand what health issues matter most to you.”

The health department is conducting a comprehensive community health assessment to find out how healthy we are in the four-county area and to learn which health issues residents are most concerned about.

SHDHD conducts a comprehensive assessment every 6 years and a smaller assessment in the intervening third year. “We have several methods of gathering information for the assessments,” Dr. Bever said. “We use data from vital statistics, U.S. Census, state registries, reports from local, state and national surveys, and a variety of other sources and reports,” she said. “We also gather data locally from focus groups, key informant interviews, and through this community survey.”

Data gathered through the assessment will be put into a report and shared back with the community. “In September, we will share the findings of the assessment with residents and community leaders at a series of priority-setting meetings. As a community, we will decide which health issues we want to focus on over the next 6 years,” said Dr. Bever. “Once we have decided on priorities, we will develop a new 6-year community health improvement plan.”

Bever says local hospitals are also involved in the assessment process. “We partner with our area hospitals, including Brodstone in Superior, Webster County Community Hospital in Red Cloud, and Mary Lanning Healthcare in Hastings in order to plan and conduct the assessment,” Dr. Bever said. “The hospitals use these data for strategic planning and to determine what activities they will do to help meet the communities’ health needs.”

The health department is aiming for 1000 surveys to be completed by the July 15 deadline. To take the on-line survey, follow this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SHDHDCommunitySurveyEnglish2018>, or go the health department website: www.southheartlandhealth.org/ and click on the picture next to “We Need Your Input.”

Groups or individuals who prefer hard copy surveys may request these from the health department by calling 877-238-7595.

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