

Knoxville Neighborhood Advisory #28 - Friday, April 10, 2009

4. Health Dept. Launches Community Effort to Improve Health

The Knox County Health Dept. has launched what it hopes will be a community-led effort to marshal existing resources to improve the health of all Knox Countians. Speakers are available for neighborhood meetings.

The new initiative is called Together! Healthy Knox. *As the name implies, we can't do it alone,* says a health department flyer.

No single entity or agency can make a community healthy. So much more can be accomplished by working together with a common goal to improve health.

To that end, the health department is collecting local health information to compose an overview of Knox County's health and quality of life. Community members can get involved by taking a survey and/or participating in a focus group.

The data gathered will be available to the entire community, which will then be invited to assist in prioritizing the order in which health problems should be addressed. The community group created through this step will create an action plan focused on empowering members of the community to address Knox County's health priorities.

By forming a community-wide partnership with the Knox County Health Department, organizations, businesses, residents, and community leaders can play a part in making health a priority throughout Knox County.

Visit www.healthyknox.org to take an online health survey, which is also available in printed form. See www.healthyknox.org/focus_groups.html to sign up for one of 15 focus groups that will take place between April 21 and June 2 at libraries and community centers around the county.

Public health experts with the health department are available to speak to neighborhoods and other community groups about this program. Contact Carlos Yunsan, public health educator, at 215-5549, or Stephanie Welch, strategic planning director, at 215-5297.