

# Indian River County Community Health Improvement Plan 2016 – 2019



**Indian River County  
Community Health Improvement Plan  
2016 – 2019**



Health Council of Southeast Florida  
600 Sandtree Drive, Suite 101  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33403  
Phone: 561-844-4220



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## Executive Summary

The Indian River County Community Health Advisory Council met in March 2016 to begin development of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The focus of the meetings was to identify the health needs priorities of the residents of Indian River County and to outline a plan of action to improve health outcomes over the next five years.

The CHIP development process was facilitated by the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) in conjunction with the Florida Department of Health in Indian River County. The process included assessing the health needs of the community, prioritizing health needs and devising an improvement plan through strategic planning. The identified health priorities outlined in this plan are based on the review of quantitative data, as well as qualitative data from various key stakeholders and community members. The top health priorities identified during this process are:

- Healthy Weight
- Environmental Health
- Mental Health
- Infant Mortality

The Advisory Council also integrated Health Literacy as a component of each of the four health priorities. In an effort to appropriately align goals, objectives and strategies with the health priorities of the county, the Advisory Council determined to identify the root causes of each of the priorities. The contributing factors to the health priorities are reflected in the Indian River County CHIP. Successively, members of the Advisory Council formulated goals and objectives, as well as outlined strategies and action steps for each health priority.

The Indian River County CHIP is the product of continuous improvement through diverse partner engagement. The broad spectrum of stakeholders dedicated time, energy and resources to creating an actionable five-year plan for Indian River County with the hope of improving the quality of life of residents in Indian River County.

## Acknowledgments

The 2016 – 2019 Indian River Community Health Improvement Plan is a product of partnership and participation of a broad spectrum in the public health system that came together to improve the quality of lives of individuals residing in Indian River County. Stakeholders, along with community members, came together to collaborate to improve and enhance services in Indian River County. The participation and dedication of these individuals, as advocates for their agencies and the populations they serve, brought tremendous value to the community health improvement planning process.

The Florida Department of Health – Indian River, along with the Health Council of Southeast Florida, wishes to extend our appreciation and thanks to all the organizations to those who committed to and contributed to improve access to health care on behalf of the residents of Indian River County. Their insight was essential to identifying health needs priorities and developing an improvement plan focused on creating a healthier Indian River County. Special recognition is due to the following entities that served on the Advisory Council and/or played a valuable role in community health improvement planning process:

- 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast
- Audubon Society (Pelican Island)
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County
- City of Fellsmere
- City of Sebastian
- City of Vero Beach
- City of Vero Beach Recreation Department
- Consumer - Registered Dietitian
- Early Learning Coalition of Indian River County
- Economic Opportunities Council of Indian River County, Inc.
- Environmental Learning Center
- Fellsmere Community Center
- Fellsmere Community Prayer and Worship Center
- Fellsmere Enrichment Center
- Florida Department of Health - Indian River County
- Gifford Youth Achievement Center
- Homeless Family Center
- Indian River County Board of County Commissioners
- Indian River County Community Development Department
- Indian River County Emergency Services
- Indian River County Fire Rescue
- Indian River County Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.
- Indian River County Hospital District
- Indian River County Medical Society
- Indian River County Ministerial Association
- Indian River County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Indian River County Sheriff's Office
- Indian River Impact 100
- Indian River Medical Center
- Indian River Neighborhood Association
- John's Island Foundation
- Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative
- Mental Health Association in Indian River County, Inc.
- Pastor's Association of Indian River County
- Progressive Civic League of Gifford, Florida, Inc.
- Riverside Church
- Rotary Club of Vero Beach Oceanside
- School District of Indian River County
- Sebastian Police Department
- Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce
- Sebastian River Medical Center
- Senior Resource Association
- St. Mark's Anglican Church
- Substance Awareness Center of Indian River County
- The Mental Health Collaborative of Indian River County
- The Source
- Treasure Coast Community Health
- Treasure Coast Food Bank
- Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council, Inc.
- United Way of Indian River County
- Visiting Nurse Association of the Treasure Coast
- Whole Family Health Center
- Youth Guidance

The Community Health Improvement Plan was developed in context of the vision, mission and values set forth by the Florida Department of Health – Indian River County. This community-driven plan is the result of ongoing input and participation of countless individuals, agencies and organizations.

## Introduction

In July 2015, the Florida Department of Health in Indian River County engaged the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) to facilitate the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plan process in Indian River County. The CHNA assessed the health needs of Indian River County through the collection, compilation and review of quantitative and qualitative data. The results of this assessment were used to aid in the identification of health needs priorities in Indian River County by a diverse group of stakeholders forming the Advisory Council.

The CHNA was also used in the development of the CHIP, a strategic and actionable plan for improving health outcomes in Indian River County from 2016-2019. The CHIP is a set of goals, objectives, strategies and activities set forth by the Advisory Council to help guide planning efforts for health policymakers, stakeholders and healthcare providers in Indian River County.

## Timeline

July 2015	Florida Department of Health in Indian River County engaged the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) to facilitate the Collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process
September 2015	First meeting of the CHNA Advisory Council, overview of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plan and review of Part I of quantitative data
September 2015	Second meeting of the CHNA Advisory Council, review of Part II of the quantitative data
October 2015	Third meeting of the CHNA Advisory Council, review of Part III of the quantitative data
November 2015	Fourth meeting of the CHNA Advisory Council, review of the qualitative data
December 2015	Fifth meeting of the CHNA Advisory Council, data recap and identification of strategic health issues
December 2015	Finalized Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
February 2016	Florida Department of Health in Indian River County engaged the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) to facilitate the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process
March 2016	First meeting of the CHIP Advisory Council, overview of the Community Health Needs Assessment and health needs prioritization
March 2016	Second meeting of the CHIP Advisory Council, root cause analysis of health needs priorities
April 2016	Third meeting of the CHIP Advisory Council, formulating goals and objectives
May 2016	Fourth meeting of the CHIP Advisory Council, developing strategies and action steps
May 2016	Finalized Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
2016-2019	CHIP Implementation



# Indian River County Snapshot

## Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

- The 2013 population in Indian River County was 141,994, 0.73% of Florida's population, and has been steadily increasing since 2009.
- Nearly a third (29.4%) of the residents in the county are 65 years or older, which is more than the rate of Florida, which is 18.6%.
- Over a fifth (20.6%) of individuals in Indian River County are under 19 years of age.
- In 2013, 85.4% of the population identified as White and 9.6% identified as Black or African American. Additionally, 11.7% of the residents in Indian River County identified as Hispanic.
- In 2013, 13.4% of Indian River County residents lived below the poverty level, which is under \$24,250 for a family of four.
- In 2013, 32.4% of residents who identified as Black or African American lived below the poverty line, higher than any other racial or ethnic group by at least 10%, which represents a racial disparity.
- Geographically, Fellsmere (32948) and Vero Beach (32960 and 32967) had over 20% of residents living below the federal poverty line.
- In Indian River County, 10.1% of the labor force was unemployed, higher than the state at 9.7%; however, percent unemployment has been decreasing steadily since 2010.
- In the 2013-2014 school year, the high school graduation rate in Indian River County was 79.1%, higher than that of Florida (76.1%); however, the rate has been decreasing since the 2011-2012 school year.

## Health Status Profile

- In 2014, there were 1,282 live births in Indian River County, a rate of 9.0 per 1,000, lower than that of the state.
- In 2014, the infant death rate was 4.7 per 1,000 live births for the county, significantly lower than in previous years and in comparison to the state at 6.0 per 1,000 live births. The 'Black and Other' infant mortality 3-year rate from 2012-2014 is over twice as high at 25.0 per 1,000 live births when compared to the 'White' infant mortality (2.6 per 1,000). The fetal death rate was 7.7 per 1,000, slightly higher than Florida's (7.1 per 1,000), and increasing since 2011.
- In 2014, 31.8% of high school students reported having used alcohol within the past 30 days (compared to Florida's 28.4%). In 2014, 14.9% of high school students reported binge drinking, higher than the state's rate (13.7%), but a decrease from 2010 (20.6%).
- There has been an increasing trend in Inpatient Discharges from 2012-2014 related to episodic mood disorders with some of the highest numbers of inpatient discharges being in the 10-14 and 15-19 age groups.
- In 2014 there were 26 deaths by suicide by county residents, an age-adjusted rate of 14.9 per 100,000 residents, which was slightly higher than the state's and higher than the Healthy People 2020 target of 10.2 per 100,000.
- The rate of hospitalizations from coronary heart disease was higher in Indian River County (353.5 per 100,000) than the state (338.0 per 100,000).
- The rate of hospitalizations from diabetes has been increasing since 2009 from 1433.4 per 100,000 to 1735.3 per 100,000 in 2012.
- The rate of obesity among adults in Indian River County is 26.1%, lower than the state's rate of 26.4% in 2013. Additionally, over 3 out of 5 adults reported being either overweight or obese in Indian River County (60.2%).
- From 2008 to 2012, the rate of students at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile in BMI in the county increased from 8.3% to 11.2% for middle school students and from 11.4% to 14.2% for high school students.

- In 2014, there were 2,033 deaths in Indian River County, a rate of 694.6 per 100,000. Over 83% of deaths were those attributed to individuals over the age of 65. The most frequent cause of deaths was cancer accounting for 25.1% of deaths, followed by heart disease, responsible for 22.3% of deaths.
- There were 107 deaths due to unintentional injury in Indian River County, an age-adjusted death rate of 54.8 per 100,000, significantly higher than that of the state (41.1 per 100,000).
- The death rate due to falls in Indian River County was higher at 16.2 per 100,000 than that of Florida (9.7 per 100,000) and has been increasing since 2011. The highest rate of deaths due to falls can be seen in the 80+ age group, which had a rate of 204.4 deaths per 100,000 residents for 2012- 2014.

## Health Resources Availability and Access Profile

- There are 6 nursing homes in Indian River County with a total of 665 licensed nursing home beds.
- There are 3 licensed hospitals in the county, two in Vero Beach and one in Sebastian, with a total of 566 licensed beds.
- In Indian River County, there are 21 assisted living facilities with a total of 965 beds, 19 home health agencies and 2 adult day care centers.
- There are two health department sites in the county, one in Vero Beach and one in Gifford.
- There are 4 FQHCs (2 in Vero Beach and 2 in Fellsmere) and one administrative site in Indian River County, all part of Treasure Coast Community Health, Inc.
- Indian River County has one Medically Underserved Population – Low Income.
- In 2014, there were 23,652 uninsured individuals in the county, accounting for 16.5% of the population, which was slightly lower than the state (16.6%). In 2014, 31.1% of residents identifying as Black or African American were uninsured, which was more than twice as high as any other racial group and an increase from 2013.

## Community Perspective

Community perspective was gathered during the Community Health Needs Assessment process, providing in-depth understanding of the issues residents and stakeholders felt were important, including how quality of life and health issues are perceived in the community.

### **Key Health Issues:**

- Dental/Oral health
- Diabetes
- Mental health
- Substance abuse
- Obesity
- Poor Nutrition/Diet
- Hypertension
- Aging Population
- Accessibility and affordability of health care coverage
- Availability, accessibility and affordability of health care services

### **Opportunities to Note:**

- Provide accessible and affordable health care and health care coverage
- Provide health education
- Increasing the awareness of access to resources in the community
- Provide additional funding and resources
- Increase the number and frequency of bus routes

- Develop walk-in clinics with extended hours
- Use collaborative and strategic thinking to fill gaps
- Partner with the local community-based organizations and agencies

**Barriers to Care:**

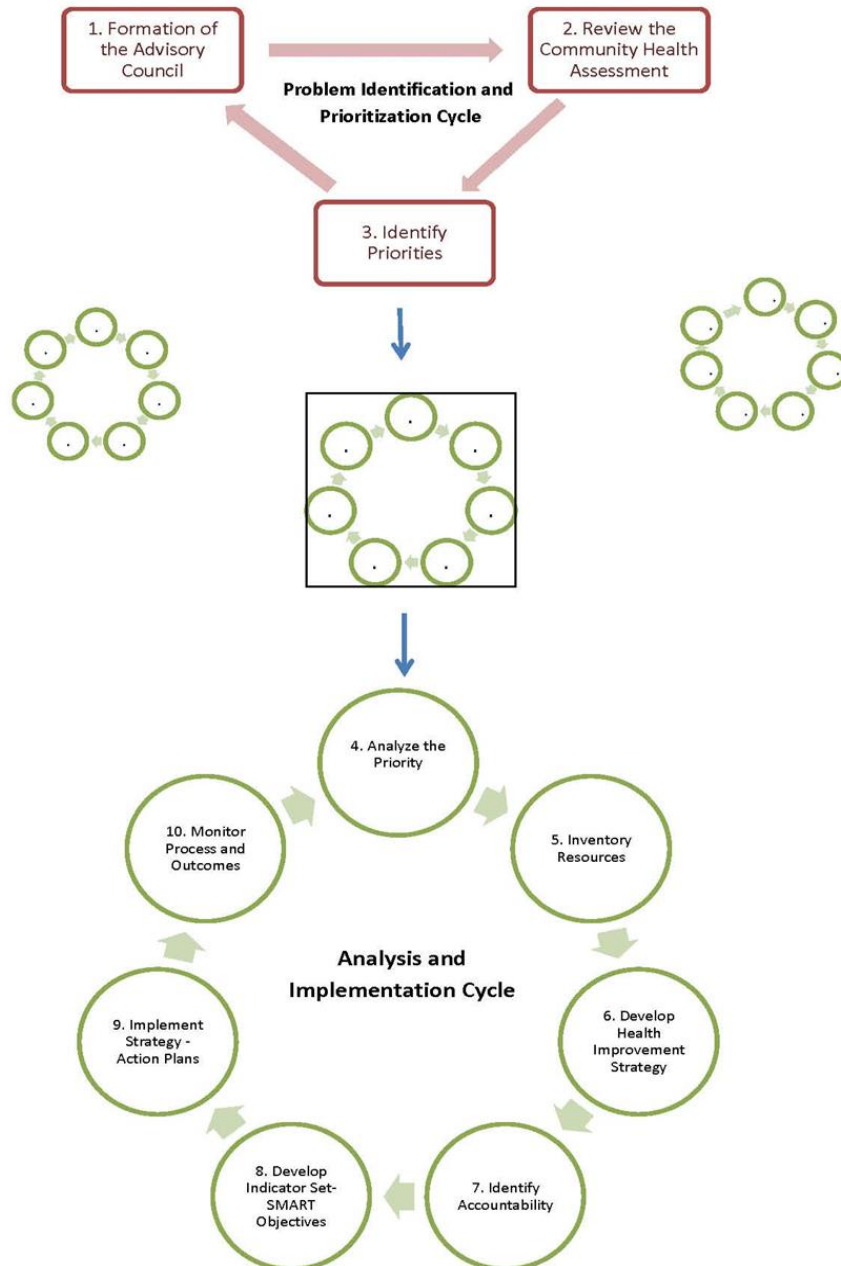
- Limited number of providers
- High cost of health care coverage and health services, including medications
- Long wait-times and waiting periods for services
- Transportation
- Lack of awareness of and access to resources in the community to maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Lack of knowledge and health education, especially prevention
- Disparities based on social and economic factors

**Community Strengths/Assets:**

- Hospitals, health department, community clinics
- Parks, walking trails, playgrounds, beaches
- Transportation
- Resources for the elderly population
- Food pantries/soup kitchens
- Local churches
- Social Service Programs
- Community-based organizations
- Strong sense of community

## Approach

### Indian River County Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan Framework



*Adapted from Institute of Medicine's Community Health Improvement Process*

## Community Health Needs Assessment

In fall of 2015, a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted in Indian River County, Florida with the intent of assessing the health needs of the community, as well as aiding in the development of a community-driven health improvement plan. The Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF), as defined in Florida State Statute (408.033) as the local health planning council serving this region of the state, was engaged by the Florida Department of Health – Indian River County to facilitate the Community Health Needs Assessment process.

Data was collected, compiled and analyzed for the CHNA to enable and guide health care providers, local health department officials, health service and program planners and community leaders to identify the strategic health issues within Indian River County, identify gaps in services and opportunities for improvement. The information was used to develop and implement the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which focuses on developing partnerships to strengthen Indian River County's infrastructure and public health system.

The implementation of the CHIP aims to improve health outcomes by identifying and utilizing community resources efficiently and forming collaborative partnership for strategic action, while accounting for the community's needs and resources. This CHIP identifies the goals, objectives, strategies, actions and performance measures for each of the selected health needs priorities:

- Environmental Health
- Mental Health
- Obesity
- Infant Mortality

The CHIP implements evidence-based strategies that align with the community's strategic health issues identified in the CHNA. The purpose of the CHIP is not only to focus attention and resources on the three health priority areas selected, but to monitor and evaluate progress towards these priorities in a continuous improvement plan. It is a detailed, executable plan that is the product of collective brainstorming, discussion and review by dedicated community partners.

## Continued Improvement through Partnership

Participation from a broad spectrum of community stakeholders is essential in identifying effective strategies to complex and multi-faceted community health issues and developing a comprehensive and community-driven improvement plan. Continuous and diverse community engagement improves results by garnering a shared commitment to improve health outcomes, developing a continuous stream of open communication and creating a shared measurement and evaluation process to ensure efficient implementation and progress.

Community health improvement efforts are grounded in collaboration, partnership and cooperation to help achieve common priorities and goals through aligned objectives and strategies. Multi-sector community ownership is an essential component of both assessing a communities needs and developing a community health improvement plan.

The following sectors were represented during this health improvement planning process: healthcare, education, public health, mental health and substance abuse, law enforcement, emergency services, parks and recreation, environmental health, business and industry, volunteer and non-profit organizations, community-based organizations and organizations known for serving underserved and vulnerable populations. Their continued involvement in the community is an invaluable component of the community health improvement plan.

## Methodology

From March – May 2016, the Indian River County Community Health Improvement Plan Advisory Council, composed of a broad spectrum of community stakeholders, intervened to discuss and prioritize the strategic health issues in Indian River County. The Advisory Council reviewed the Community Health Needs Assessment to identify the top health needs priorities in Indian River County. The Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) facilitated a rigorous, multi-voting activity with the Advisory Council to identify the top four health needs priorities that will be addressed in the 2016 – 2019 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

The CHIP set forth in this document aligns not only with the mission and vision of the Florida Department of Health in Indian River County, but also with the Florida State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Furthermore, the process took into consideration the opinions and input of community members. The Plan focuses on the top four health priorities that were selected by the Advisory during a community-driven process. There were other strategic health issues that emerged as well, and though they are not addressed herein, they are nonetheless important and are being integrated into future health planning activities in the community. Planning processes underway by the Indian River Hospital District and Indian River Medical Center include strategic health issues that were among those identified during this community health assessment and planning process.

The four health needs priorities selected were as follows:

- Environmental Health
- Mental Health
- Obesity
- Infant Mortality

Health Literacy was also chosen as an essential tenet of health needs in the community and Advisory Council members agreed that Health Literacy should be interwoven into each priority during CHIP development and implementation. HCSEF led Advisory Council members through a Root Cause Analysis to identify the “root causes” and contributing factors of each priority. Advisory Council members were questioned with the “Why?” technique to identify root causes, which aided in the development of goals, objectives and strategies that align with each priority.

Upon review of the results of the Root Cause Analyses, content experts from the Environmental Health and Mental Health sectors were chosen to present additional information to Advisory Council members. Content experts provided additional insight on the Environmental Health and Mental Health issues specific to Indian River County and identified gaps in services as well as barriers to addressing the issues discussed at previous Advisory Council meetings.

Additionally, Advisory Council members discussed current activities and resources in the community related to the selected health needs priorities. Using strategic planning methods, members of the Advisory Council divided into priority-specific workgroups to formulate goals and objectives. In subsequent meetings, the members discussed the strategies, approaches and established performance measures that could be employed to achieve the goals and objectives set forth within each priority area.

The strategies and activities outlined in this CHIP attempt to:

- Address the underlying causes of the identified health priorities
- Utilize data to identify priorities and to measure the impact of interventions
- Detail measurable objectives to evaluate progress
- Implement evidence-supported models for community health improvement
- Outline approaches that are relevant and realistic in the community, given the available time and resources
- Devise an action plan that can have a broad-reaching community-wide impact

- Engage a broad range of community stakeholders
- Support ongoing efforts in the community
- Focus on improving health factors and health outcomes in the community

Descriptions of evidence-based programs and best practices related to the selected priorities are provided. An important element to any process is continued evaluation, which allows for monitoring of progression toward outcome goals and allows for adjustments to be made, if necessary. Evaluation throughout implementation of the CHIP will guide future planning activities in the community.

# Community Health Improvement Plan

## Overview

### **Healthy Weight**

Goal 1: Ensure Indian River County residents strive and sustain a healthy weight through a holistic approach.

- Objective: Reduce the percent of overweight and obese individuals by 5% by December 2019
- Objective: Conduct 6 audits to assess the walkability of Indian River County by December 2019

### **Environmental Health**

Goal 1: Improve the quality of the built environment in Indian River County.

- Objective: Reduce nitrogen input into groundwater and the Indian River Lagoon by X amount by January 30, 2020.

Goal 2: Improve the quality of the natural environment in Indian River County.

- Objective: By September 30, 2019, assess Indian River County pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and increase connectivity between community resource centers, including green spaces (e.g. schools, churches, grocery stores and farmer's markets, employment area hubs, medical centers, libraries, parks and community gardens, social service agencies, and cultural centers) by 20%.

### **Mental Health**

Goal 1: Improve the access to mental health care in Indian River County.

- Objective: By September 2020, establish the Mental Health Collaborative's Connections Center, which provides a centralized point of access, referral and care coordination for mental health and substance abuse services while also addressing the related social determinants of health.
- Objective: Increase the number of mental health professionals practicing in the county by 10% by 2020.

Goal 2: Enable messaging in the county that nurtures an individual, including children.

- Objective: Increase the number of education sessions for parents and guardians on mental health services awareness in the community by December 2020.
- Objective: Increase mental health screenings for children within the community by December 2020.
- Objective: Establish a pilot mentoring program within the county by December 2020.

### **Infant Mortality**

Goal 1: Improve access to prenatal care

- Objective: Increase the number/rate of mothers who enter early into prenatal care

Goal 2: Reduce disparities in infant mortality

- Objective: Reduce the infant mortality rate from 6.9 to 6.0 per 1,000 live births.

Goal 3: Reduce unplanned pregnancy

- Objective: Reduce the number/rate of teenage pregnancy

Goal 4: Increase preconception health behaviors among reproductive age people

- Objective: Decrease the rate of obesity among pregnant women



## Healthy Weight

### *Why is it a Priority?*

During the past two decades, our nation has experienced a significant increase in the percentage of overweight and obese children and adults. From 2008 to 2012, the rate of students at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile in BMI in the county increased from 8.3% to 11.2% for middle school students and from 11.4% to 14.2% for high school students. Furthermore, over 3 out of 5 adults reported being either overweight or obese in Indian River County. These alarming rates are of significant concern in the Indian River community, particularly due to the projections that the trend of overweight and obesity will continue to increase.

Being overweight and obese has serious health consequences including: coronary heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, hypertension, stroke, liver and gallbladder disease, and sleep apnea. There are also economic consequences associated with being overweight and obese. In addition to the costs related to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of many of the associated comorbidities and conditions, there are indirect costs from decreased productivity and missed work and school, as well as costs associated with loss of future income due to premature death. There are several factors involved in being overweight and obese, which makes it a difficult issue to address. Health behaviors, such as exercise and diet, genes, the environment, certain medical conditions and medications can all play a part in causing individuals becoming overweight and/or obese.

Obesity has been identified as a health issue across the nation and in the state of Florida. The State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) outlines a set of goals, objectives and strategies dedicated to increasing the number of healthy children and adults in Florida. The SHIP includes strategies to increase the availability, accessibility and affordability of healthy foods, which are complemented by the strategies that will be used in Indian River County to reduce the number of overweight and obese children and adults. Initiatives and evidence-based programs such as employee-wellness programs and school-targeted interventions are strategies outlined in this CHIP under guidance of the State Health Improvement Plan.

**Action Plan**

<b>Goal 1: Ensure Indian River County residents strive and sustain a healthy weight through a holistic approach.</b>	
<b>Objective: Reduce the percent of overweight and obese individuals by 5% by December 2019</b>	
<b>Strategy: Develop an electronic and paper "How to be healthy" Guidebook that includes food, farmers markets.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Include culturally appropriate foods	
Provide guidebook in multiple languages	
Inventory family-targeted activities	
<b>Strategy: Implement a Healthy Champions Initiative</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Connect 5210, schools, Moonshot Moment	
Use principals as healthy champions	
Use diverse healthy champions to reach subpopulations in the community	
Develop a county-wide slogan	
Pilot program at Fellsmere Elementary	
<b>Strategy: Implement Workplace Wellness programs</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Inventory local models (such as Visiting Nurses Association model)	
Share inventory information with community	
Encourage local businesses to adopt wellness programs	
Promote programs such as WeightWatchers, Curves, yoga, meditation, cancer survivor walks/programs	
Create recognitions/competitions (i.e. Healthy Champion Business) to increase awareness of workplace wellness	
<b>Strategy: Implement 5210 in all school cafeterias</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Encourage Healthy Choices	Schools implementing 5210 Program
Encourage community buy-in with administration	
Conduct an audit using an external nutritionist of the food and nutrition services provided by schools	Audits performed assessing nutrition services in schools
<b>Objective: Conduct 6 audits to assess the walkability of Indian River County by December 2019</b>	
<b>Strategy: Create an interactive "Healthy Maps" tool, which includes pathways, trails, beaches</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>

## *Evidence-Supported Initiatives*

### **Let's Go!**

“Let’s Go!” is a nationally recognized childhood obesity prevention program based in Maine, which focuses on creating healthy places to help children and families eat healthy and be active. “Let’s Go!” works in six different settings to reach families where they live, study, work and play to reinforce the importance of healthy living. The 5-2-1-0 message (5 or more fruits and vegetables, 2 hours or less of recreational screen time, 1 hour or more of physical activity and 0 sugary drinks, more water and low fat milk a day) is used across the settings to remind families of these recommendations for healthy eating and active living”).<sup>1</sup>

### **Let's Move!**

Let’s Move! is a comprehensive initiative, dedicated to solving the problem of childhood obesity. Let’s Move! is focused on putting children on the path to a healthy future during their earliest months and years; giving parents helpful information and fostering environments that support healthy choices; providing healthier foods in our schools; ensuring that every family has access to healthy, affordable food; and, helping children become more physically active. This initiative is led by the White House’s Task Force on Childhood Obesity and focuses on the five pillars of the Let’s Move! initiative:

1. Creating a healthy start for children
2. Empowering parents and caregivers
3. Providing healthy food in schools
4. Improving access to healthy, affordable foods
5. Increasing physical activity

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<sup>1</sup> [www.letsgo.org](http://www.letsgo.org)

## Environmental Health

### *Why is it a Priority?*

Establishing and maintaining a healthy environment is central to increasing quality of life and years of healthy life. Environmental factors are diverse and far reaching. Without proper assessment, correction and prevention, environmental factors may adversely affect the health of present and future generations.

There are two subsections of environment that the Indian River County Advisory Committee focused on: the natural environment and the built, or man-made, environment. The natural environment refers includes air, water and soils, and also the physical, chemical, biological and social features of our surroundings. The built, or man-made, environment refers to physical structures where people live and work such as homes, offices, schools, factories and farms, as well as community systems such as roads and transportation systems, land use practices and waste management.

Indian River County lacks a large-scale bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The shortage of sidewalks and trails, as well as safety issues, were of concern to the group. Additionally, the Indian River County Advisory Committee elected to address nitrogen pollution of the Indian River Lagoon and groundwater. Environmental Health was a component of the previous Indian River County 2012 CHIP and continues to be an essential part of the county's improvement plan, as well as the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Under the SHIP strategic issue area of Community Redevelopment and Partnership, goals are set forth to maximize partnership and collaboration while "[building] and [revitalizing] communities so people can live healthy lives."<sup>2</sup> Strategies developed in SHIP, such as increasing access to physical activity opportunities and increasing the availability of health foods, are also incorporated in Indian River County's CHIP.

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<sup>2</sup> Florida Department of Health, 2012. State Health Improvement Plan 2012-2015. Available at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/about-the-department-of-health/documents/state-health-improvement-plan.pdf>.

**Action Plan**

<b>Goal 1: Improve the quality of the built environment in Indian River County.</b>	
<b>Objective: Reduce nitrogen input into groundwater and the Indian River Lagoon by <i>X amount</i> by January 30, 2020.</b>	
<b>Strategy: By January 20, 2020, reduce the number of onsite sewage disposal and treatment systems in high priority areas identified by local utility departments by 15% as measured by system abandonment permits.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Strategy: By January 30, 2020, in areas without sewers, increase the number of pre-1983 onsite sewage disposal systems that meet a 24 inch wettest season water table separation as measured by repair permits.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Strategy: By January 30, 2020, improve storm water treatment by installing two storm water treatment facilities.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Strategy: By January 30, 2020, reduce fertilizer usage by 20%.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Goal 2: Improve the quality of the natural environment in Indian River County.</b>	
<b>Objective: By September 30, 2019, assess Indian River County pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and increase connectivity between community resource centers, including green spaces (e.g. schools, churches, grocery stores and farmer’s markets, employment area hubs, medical centers, libraries, parks and community gardens, social service agencies, and cultural centers) by 20%.</b>	
<b>Strategy: Utilize a survey tool, deployed online and on paper at community resource centers, to establish baseline data on current walking and biking route use, challenges to use, and community interest in increasing use</b>	

Key Action Steps	Measures
<b>Strategy: Implement Complete Streets Initiative.</b>	
Key Action Steps	Measures
<b>Strategy: Create and provide education and outreach materials, made available online and onsite at above community resource centers, regarding importance of daily nature contact and leading a physically active lifestyle.</b>	
Key Action Steps	Measures
<b>Strategy: Create and provide walking and biking resource guides, including routes and safety recommendations, and make available online and in community resource centers.</b>	
Key Action Steps	Measures
<b>Strategy: Investigate and determine feasibility of general public members gaining access to existing outdoor play areas, including school grounds, on evenings and weekends.</b>	
Key Action Steps	Measures

## *Evidence-Supported Initiatives*

### **Complete Streets**

Complete Streets are those that utilize design standards to make streets safe for all users, including those who walk, ride bikes and use public transportation. A Complete Street may include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, and roundabouts, among others.

Complete streets promote active transportation, which is human powered transport (walking, bicycling, accessing public transit). The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) identified a strong correlation between planning and investments in infrastructure and some of the most serious health concerns facing the United States, including heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. Currently, one third of our nation's children are overweight or obese according to the CDC.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [www.browardmpo.org/projects-studies/complete-streets](http://www.browardmpo.org/projects-studies/complete-streets)

## Mental Health

### *Why is it a Priority?*

Mental health is essential to personal well-being, family and interpersonal relationships and the ability to contribute to their community. Mental health disorders are among the most common causes of disabilities in the nation. Poor mental health or the presence of mental illness often result in detrimental physical health and financial outcomes. Failure to access care is a significant issue among those suffering from mental health conditions. Stigma, lack of education and awareness and missed opportunities for screenings and interventions are among the barriers for receiving appropriate care.

In Indian River County from 2012-2014, there has been an increasing trend in inpatient discharges related to episodic mood disorders with a significant amount of inpatient discharges in the 10-14 and 15-19 age groups. Additionally, in 2014, there were 26 deaths by suicide in Indian River County, an age-adjusted rate of 14.9 per 100,000 residents, which was slightly higher than the state's and higher than the Healthy People 2020 target of 10.2 per 100,000. The highest rates are among the 45-64 age group, and have been increasing since 2009. Due to the significant and impactful consequences and the challenges and barriers experienced accessing care, the Indian River County Advisory Council deemed mental health a priority.

Furthermore, mental health has been outlined as a priority in Florida's State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), with a goal of "[improving] behavioral health services so that adults, children and families are active, self-sufficient participants living in their communities."<sup>4</sup> The CHIP uses strategies to strengthen the integration of mental health services with primary care services, as well as to reduce barriers to accessing behavioral and mental health services. The strategies and objectives outlined in the Indian River County CHIP align with the SHIP with the hope towards the common goal of improving the behavioral and mental health and well-being of residents of the county and the state.

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<sup>4</sup> Florida Department of Health, 2012. State Health Improvement Plan 2012-2015. Available at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/about-the-department-of-health/documents/state-health-improvement-plan.pdf>.



**Action Plan**

<b>Goal 1: Improve the access to mental health care in Indian River County.</b>	
<b>Objective: By September 2020, establish the Mental Health Collaborative’s Connections Center, which provides a centralized point of access, referral and care coordination for mental health and substance abuse services while also addressing the related social determinants of health.</b>	
<b>Strategy:</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Objective: Increase the number of mental health professionals practicing in the county by 10% by 2020.</b>	
<b>Strategy: Establish training sites and internship opportunities for new providers.</b>	
Contact universities and colleges to recruit professionals entering the mental health field.	
Inventory the current number of training sites in the county.	
Increase the number of mental health agencies within the county that are CEU providers	
<b>Goal 2: Enable messaging in the county that nurtures an individual, including children.</b>	
<b>Objective: Increase the number of education sessions for parents and guardians on mental health services awareness in the community by December 2020.</b>	
<b>Strategy: Establish a mental health mobile unit to distribute materials that raise awareness.</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Objective: Increase mental health screenings for children within the community by December 2020.</b>	
<b>Strategy:</b>	
<b>Objective: Establish a pilot mentoring program within the county by December 2020.</b>	
<b>Strategy:</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>

*Evidence-Supported Initiatives*

## Infant Mortality

### *Why is it a Priority?*

Infant mortality is often used as a measure of overall population health. In 2014, the infant death rate was 4.7 per 1,000 live births in Indian River County, which was significantly lower than in previous years and in comparison with the state. Although the overall rate has improved, the 'Black and Other' infant mortality 3-year rate from 2012-2014 is over twice as high, at 25.0 per 1,000 live births when compared to the 'White' infant mortality (2.6 per 1,000). This significant discrepancy was of major concern to the Advisory Committee.

In relation to the Florida State Health Improvement Plan, in 2009, the State's infant mortality rate ranked 29<sup>th</sup> among the states. In 2010, black babies born in Florida were 2.5 times as likely to experience an infant death as white babies. In addition, in 2009, black mothers experienced preterm birth 1.5 times more often than white mothers.

In Indian River County, the Committee identified areas of need such as prenatal care and education, proper nutrition, and access to care post-pregnancy. Improvement strategies were targeted at these identified areas.

**Action Plan**

<b>Goal 1: Improve access to prenatal care</b>	
<b>Objective: Increase the number/rate of mothers who enter early into prenatal care</b>	
<b>Strategy: Establish regular family practitioners as opposed to health department clinics</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Goal 2: Reduce disparities in infant mortality</b>	
<b>Objective: Reduce the infant mortality rate from 6.9 to 6.0 per 1,000 live births.</b>	
<b>Strategy: Increase safe sleep practice</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Goal 3: Reduce unplanned pregnancy</b>	
<b>Objective: Reduce the number/rate of teenage pregnancy</b>	
<b>Strategy: Provide mentoring to youth through community partners</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>Goal 4: Increase preconception health behaviors among reproductive age people</b>	
<b>Objective: Decrease the rate of obesity among pregnant women</b>	
<b>Strategy:</b>	
<b>Key Action Steps</b>	<b>Measures</b>

## *Evidence-Supported Initiatives*

### **Community Voice**

Community Voice is a grassroots program that teaches residents about prenatal health in an effort to reduce Black infant mortality and improve birth outcomes. The Community Voice program aims to support behaviors that promote healthy pregnancies by motivating people and encouraging lifestyle changes. The program trains residents to become "Lay Health Advisors" through a series of five classes that address a variety of health concerns, including SIDS, preterm labor, and early prenatal care. Community Voice participants engage community members and spread positive health education information through Town Hall meetings, churches, civic organizations, community events, and other local venues.

## Health Literacy

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 defines health literacy as the “degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions.”<sup>5</sup> Health literacy is a vital component of developing and implementing a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) at the national, state and local levels. Improving health literacy is vital to capacity building and understanding health choices and consequences. Individuals who provide health information and education should be cognizant of a consumer’s health literacy skills and should tailor information and interventions to aid community members in understanding the importance of health.

This CHIP was developed with a health literacy component in each of the priorities and aligns with the goals of National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.<sup>6</sup> Through collaboration and partnership, the Indian River County Community Health Improvement Plan hopes to improve accessibility, quality, and safety of health care; reduce costs while using resources efficiently; and improve the health and quality of life of the residents of Indian River County.

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<sup>5</sup> Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, Title V. Available at <http://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/v-healthcare-workforce.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2010). National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy. Washington, DC: Author.

## Using the Plan

The implementation of the Indian River County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) will strengthen the public health system, guide planning future efforts, build partnerships and ultimately promote the well-being and quality of life for Indian River County residents. The Indian River County CHIP developed by community stakeholders and members builds upon the foundation of local initiatives and seeks out to improve the well-being of the residents of Indian River County. Below are some suggestions and strategies of ways that you can play a part in achieving a healthier community.

- Raise awareness of the health priorities in the community and the CHIP
- Support programs, policies, initiatives, resources and campaigns aimed to address the health priorities in the community
- Be an advocate and champion in the community for healthy behaviors and for health improvement
- Share resources and promote collaboration to strengthen the health improvement efforts in the county

## Get Involved

Community health improvement is a community-driven process, in which all stakeholders and residents are invited to improve the health and well-being of the county. For additional information or to get involved in the health improvement activities, please contact:

**Miranda Hawker, MPH**

Administrator  
Florida Department of Health in Indian River County  
772-794-7400

**Julianne Price, RS**

Senior Management Analyst II  
Florida Department of Health in Indian River County  
[Julianne.Price@flhealth.gov](mailto:Julianne.Price@flhealth.gov)  
772-794-7445