



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER

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February 17, 2010

EDITORS: The following is for immediate release. If you have any questions, please contact Evelyn Walker, Chester County Chief Management Officer, at (610) 344-6024 or Rebecca Brain, Communications Coordinator, at (610) 344-6279.

Chester County ranked the healthiest county in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Report to be released today by University of Wisconsin

WEST CHESTER _ Chester County has been ranked the healthiest county in Pennsylvania, according to a study released today in Washington, D.C., by the University of Wisconsin.

The study placed Chester County at the top of a number of categories, including health outcomes and health factors. The study looked at a number of factors, including the length and quality of life, health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors and the physical environment.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute compiled the 2010 *County Health Rankings*, a collection of 50 reports that reflect the overall health of counties in every state across the nation. For the first time, counties can get a snapshot of how healthy their residents are by comparing their overall health and the factors that influence their health, with other counties in their state, according to the report.

The report is designed to allow counties to determine where they are doing well and where they need to improve.

Commenting on the report, Chester County Commissioner Chair Carol Aichele said: “This study validates the efforts of the Chester County Health Department and the tremendous network of healthcare providers to ensure the good health of all county residents. If, as the report states, where we live matters to our health, then I’m glad that I live in Chester County.”

Commissioner Terence Farrell said: “Chester County’s success in this report can be attributed to a number of factors, including the fact that our health department is so well established, so well managed and staffed, and so far-reaching. Many of our citizens and organizations look to the Chester County Health Department to provide a wide range of services – from treatment, prevention and education on health issues, to a strong environmental component that includes water and well testing, restaurant inspections and food handler training.

“One of the priorities of our Strategic Planning Initiative is a healthy community,” adds Commissioner Kathi Cozzone. “Our county-wide goals include promoting and protecting the public health environment of Chester County citizens, and we have encouraged our own County employees to lead by example, through the development of a very successful wellness program.

Chester County Health Department Director Margaret Rivello said: “While this is an excellent rating for the overall county, there are still geographical areas where access to healthcare is a challenge, and people still need help adopting healthy behaviors.

“We are very pleased with the results of this report, but we cannot rest on our laurels while there is still work to be done,” adds Rivello.

Chester County, located 35 miles west of Philadelphia, is the first county in Pennsylvania to initiate a strategic planning process and has a Aaa rating on its bonds from Moody’s Investors Service as well as AAA ratings from Standard & Poor’s and Fitch. Established by William Penn as one of Pennsylvania’s three original counties, Chester County has been named by Forbes.com as one of America’s best places to raise a family.