



May 11, 2015

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## **Health Department partners receive first-ever Sparkler Award at Leaders' Summit**

The Kane County partners involved in the Health Department's Community Health Assessment were awarded the first-ever Sparkler Award in the category of Innovation. The awards ceremony took place during the Kane County 2015 Leaders' Summit, May 8<sup>th</sup>, at the Q Center in St. Charles.

Accepting the award were Karin Podolski, Director of Community Health Outreach for Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital, County Board Member, Kane County Board's Public Health Committee Vice-Chairman Susan Starrett, and Assistant Director of Community Health Resources for the Kane County Health Department Dan Eder.

Because of our strong partnerships with all 5 hospitals serving Kane County, the INC Board, and numerous other organizations we are able to conduct a robust assessment of the community and determine strategies to improve the health of our residents. Such an assessment would not have been possible without all their hard work and contributions throughout this process.

Anyone interested in participating in the Assessment's Public comment period is encouraged to visit [www.kanehealth.com/cha.htm](http://www.kanehealth.com/cha.htm), where you can watch a webinar and participate in the survey.

The summit's keynote speaker was Christopher Coes, Director of LOCUS, a network of real estate developers and investors who advocate for sustainable, walkable development. He works with real estate developers and investors across the country to advance LOCUS' public policy agenda. This workshop also featured top state officials sharing their departments' visions for working with local leaders and the agency programs at their disposal.

The Leaders' Summit was the 12<sup>th</sup> such event hosted by the county since the first policy workshop was convened in 1999. This year's workshop will be the first among a series of workshops focused on connecting local leaders and policymakers with the most innovative resources for promoting health and prosperity in their communities.

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In 2014, for the second time, the five hospitals serving Kane County and the INC Board worked together with Kane County Health Department to complete a community health assessment and begin work on a community health improvement plan. The hospitals, Health Department, and the INC Board have overlapping requirements to complete health needs assessments and improvement plans. This funding partnership eliminated the need for each agency to pay for and collect similar data.

The Health Assessment Partnership resulted in significant cost-savings to the organizations involved and tax payers. Coordinating the assessment and plan development phases results in more closely aligned funding implementation by the participating agencies that will address the top health issues facing Kane County residents. In addition, the Health Department is moving to a three year assessment cycle, from a five year cycle, to align with hospital requirements and ensure the partnership will continue in the future.

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