

INTRODUCTION

Community Diagnosis is a community–based community–owned process to identify and address health needs of Tennesseans. As a health assessment and planning process, Community Diagnosis involves:

- ⇒ Analyzing the health status of the community.
- ⇒ Evaluating the health resources, services, and systems of care within the community.
- ⇒ Assessing attitudes toward community health services and issues.
- ⇒ Identifying priorities, establishing goals, and determining course of action to improve the health status of the community.
- ⇒ Establishing a baseline for measuring improvement over time.

The Loudon County Community Health Improvement Advisory Council in collaboration with Covenant Health and the East Tennessee Department of Health conducted community surveys. They reviewed various data sets and evaluated resources in the community to identify areas of concern that affect the health of Loudon County citizens. A list of council members participating in the assessment can be found in Appendix A.

As a result of the assessment process, the health council will develop a health plan for Loudon County. The health plan will contain goals to improve the health of Loudon County residents. Intervention strategies will be developed to deal with problems identified and a listing of resources needed to implement those strategies.

Benefits of Community Diagnosis for the community included:

- Providing communities the opportunity to participate in directing change in the health services and delivery system.
- Armed with appropriate data and analysis, communities can focus on health status assessment and the development of locally designed, implemented, and monitored health strategies.
- Provide justification for budget improvement request.
- Provide to state-level programs and their regional office personnel, information and coordination of prevention and intervention strategies at the local level.
- Serve health planning and advocacy needs at the community level. Here the community leaders and local health departments provide leadership to ensure that documented community health problems are addressed.

This document provides a description of the Community Diagnosis (Assessment) activities to-date. Data will be described with emphasis on important issues identified by the council. Summary findings from work done by other organizations are included..