

Atchison Co Leaders Determine Community Health Problems

(KAIR) -- Groups of Atchison County leaders and elected officials were busy Thursday evening learning results of a recent community health assessment, as well as identifying strengths and weaknesses of the county.

The Atchison Hospital hosted the town hall facilitated by Kansas City consultant Vince Vandehaar.

He spent the first half of the 90 minute session going over results of the most recent community health rankings, determined by an organization in Wisconsin that assesses every county in the nation.

Vandehaar, who also has facilitated discussions throughout Kansas, says the data discovered in Atchison County identified several strengths compared to those other areas, such as a good student to teacher ratio, low traffic accident fatalities and accessibility to dental and certain hospital services.

However, several factors were considered below average, including categories dealing with the treatment of veterans.

Some factors were also identified as occurring more often in Atchison County than the norm, including the number of families and children living below the poverty level, births from teenage mothers, adult smoking, excessive drinking, and death from diabetes.

Vandehaar also indicated two categories in the county that were determined as a major increase from the norms.

(Play Audio)

Attendees then brainstormed in groups to identify strengths of the county and things that needed to be improved on.

The areas to improve were then dwindled down to the top four categories: problems with Substance Abuse, Economic Development, Mental Health and a lack of Urgent Care facilities.

These categories will be submitted to the state, where ranking officials up to the Governor will examine for potential state attention.

Many Signals Communications