

# THE HEALTH CARE COUNCIL OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## HEALTH OF LEHIGH VALLEY RESIDENTS HIGHLIGHTED IN NEW STUDY

*Higher prevalence of illness continues to affect quality of life  
despite improved access to high-quality medical care.*

ALLENTOWN, PA – March 27, 2014 – On Wednesday the Fifth Annual County Health Rankings were released. The rankings show the health position of nearly every county in the nation and illustrate that much of what affects health occurs outside of the doctor's office. They focus on specific factors that we know affect health, such as education, income, water quality, rates of smoking, obesity and other factors. The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/pennsylvania/2014/rankings/outcomes/overall>

The Health Care Council of the Lehigh Valley (HCC) was formed to measure and improve the broadly defined health of the Lehigh Valley. Created by the not-for-profit Health Care Systems of the Lehigh Valley and expanded to include local health departments and the community health center, the HCC's objective is to cooperatively update our world-class Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to continue to galvanize action to provide a dramatic, demonstrable and sustained impact on the health of the citizens of the Lehigh Valley.

Rankings for Northampton and Lehigh Counties:

### **Overall Health Outcomes Rankings**

- Northampton (21<sup>st</sup> out of 67 counties) and Lehigh (19<sup>th</sup> out of 67 counties) counties have retained their position in the healthiest one-third of all counties in the state of Pennsylvania.
- The Health Outcomes Rankings are determined by combining the mortality (length of life) rankings with the morbidity (quality of life) rankings. These rankings reveal very different descriptions of health in the Lehigh Valley.

### **Length of Life (Mortality) Rankings**

- Northampton and Lehigh Counties have held fast to their positions in the best 20 percent of all counties in Pennsylvania. People are more likely to live life to a full term in the Lehigh Valley than other counties in Pennsylvania.
- Northampton ranks as the 8<sup>th</sup> best mortality rate in the state for 2013 and 2014.