

# Oklahoma TurningPoint

Collaborating for a New Century in Public Health

**A strong public health system is crucial for protecting and improving the health of Americans.**

## Oklahoma's Public Health

With health departments in 69 of its 77 counties, Oklahoma has one of the best public health infrastructures in the nation.

Unfortunately, our public health infrastructure has not resulted in a healthier population. Oklahoma ranks 46<sup>th</sup> in the United Health Foundation 2002 State Health Rankings. Oklahoma ranks among the worst in infectious diseases, death rates, and teenage births. Oklahoma's death rates for heart disease, cancer, injuries, stroke, and emphysema are higher than the national average.

Oklahoma citizens are overburdened with more than their share of disability and unnecessary death.

An essential element missing in how public health deals with these problems in Oklahoma is community-based decision making.

Oklahoma's communities can and must voice their community health needs and take an active role in making public health decisions as equal partners.

### For more information

Larry Olmstead or Neil Hann

Community Development Service  
Oklahoma State Dept. of Health  
1000 N.E. 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1299  
405-271-6127

THE  
ROBERT WOOD  
JOHNSON  
FOUNDATION®

## What is Oklahoma Turning Point?

The national Turning Point Initiative aims to transform and strengthen the public health system in the United States by making it more community based and collaborative. Turning Point in Oklahoma has more than 40 partnerships across the state working to strengthen Oklahoma's public health infrastructure through community-based action in order to respond to the challenge of protecting and improving the public's health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## How is Oklahoma Turning Point improving public health?

- Promoting a community-based approach in public health decision-making through 40 local partnerships
- Increased cooperation of key state and local partners that successfully addressed secondhand smoke through legislation
- Developing partnerships with the state, county agencies, and communities to *assess local public health needs and develop local solutions*
- Local partnerships developing Community Health Improvement Plans
- Established a resource center for data collection and analysis that will help communities implement population-wide services at the local level

## What can Oklahoma Turning Point help you do?

- Engage communities in assessing local public health needs and defining priorities
- Identify barriers to community health, including lack of health care coverage and services, poverty, attitudes and belief systems, and environmental factors
- Strengthen partnerships that share in planning, building, and maintaining healthy communities
- Improve the public's health through health promotion and disease prevention initiatives and policy change

## Support

The Turning Point Initiative is funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The National Program Office is located at the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine. Contact the National Program Office at 206-616-8410 or visit [www.turningpointprogram.org](http://www.turningpointprogram.org).

