

# Executive Summary

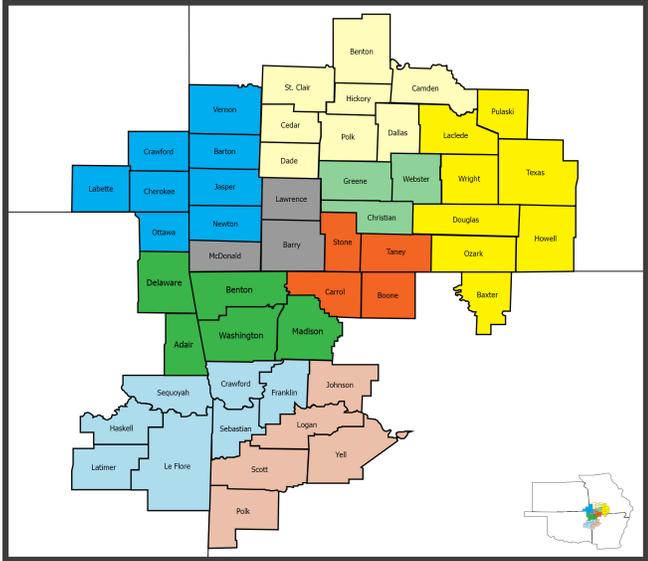
In early 2015, a variety of organizations across the Ozarks came together to better understand the health status, behaviors and needs of the populations they serve.

Under the umbrella of the local Ozarks Health Commission, this first-time collaboration is the largest in the region spanning four states—Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kansas—51 counties and four hospital systems.

The working group saw the value of using a systematic, data-driven assessment to inform decisions and guide efforts to improve community health and wellness on a regional level. This larger, concerted approach will leverage common strengths and strategies to move in the same direction on significant health concerns.

This assessment, along with the resulting action plan, will allow decision-makers to have a more holistic and up-to-date picture with which to strategically address community health concerns in their own jurisdictions.

**Regional Communities Map**



Community Name	Community Color	Population	Land Area Rank
Rogers Community	Green	532,979	4
Springfield Community	Light Green	401,235	8
Joplin Community	Blue	321,884	3
Fort Smith Community	Light Blue	321,835	2
Lebanon Community	Yellow	237,949	1
Bolivar Community	Light Yellow	150,662	5
Branson Community	Orange	150,076	7
Booneville Community	Light Orange	101,177	6
Monett Community	Grey	96,315	9

# Key Participants

Organization	Category	Service Area	Organization Type
Burrell Behavioral Health	Nonprofit	MO	Outpatient behavioral health
Citizens Memorial Healthcare	Nonprofit	MO	Hospital system
CoxHealth	Nonprofit	MO	Health system
Freeman Health System	Nonprofit	MO, KS, OK	Health system
Jasper County Health Dept.	Local Govt	MO	Health Department
Joplin Health Dept.	Local Govt	MO	Health Department
Mercy	Nonprofit	MO, KS, OK, AR	Health system
Polk County Health Center	Local Govt	MO	Health Department
Springfield-Greene County Health Dept.	Local Govt	MO	Health Department
Taney County Health Dept.	Local Govt	MO	Health Department

# The Assessment Process

The priorities for each community emerged as a result of data and feedback collection from a variety of sources, including:

- a survey open to members of the public and partner agencies in all jurisdictions;
- secondary data collected from CommunityCommons.org and other sources;
- focus groups targeting underserved, chronically ill and low-income populations in each community; and
- emergency department data from hospital partners.

These sources were combined and compared to develop community priorities which weighed morbidity, mortality and a variety of other factors. More on the results of the survey, focus group, data analysis and priority ranking can be found in the Methodology section of this report.

# Themes for the Region

It quickly became apparent through this assessment that health issues transcend State and County boundaries and health system catchment areas. Health problems such as cardiovascular disease and behavioral health manifest themselves in a similar manner

throughout the entire 51-county footprint. As we move forward, it's not difficult to imagine a scenario where we have consensus on what the health challenges are, how to best address those challenges and end up with improvements to the public's health based on collective impact.

## **We Want to Hear From You**

The Ozarks Health Commission (OHC) welcomes and encourages feedback and suggestions on future assessments and action plans as this effort continues. Questions, comments or concerns can be submitted at [OzarksHealthCommission.org](http://OzarksHealthCommission.org).