Dakota County
Public Health Infrastructure

Public health infrastructure refers to all aspects of the public health system that help health professionals carry out essential public health services to promote, protect and maintain the health of the community as a whole. Components of the public health system include: workforce capacity and competency, information and data systems, and organizational and systems capacity. The public health system includes activities that are required by law, efforts to assure the delivery of public health services to diverse populations, and actions that help maintain the public health system.

Organization
- The mission of the Dakota County Public Health Department is: Building healthy families and communities in Dakota County through partnerships to:
  - Prevent disease, disability and injury;
  - Promote physical health, mental health and safety; and
  - Protect health and the environment.

The Dakota County Public Health Department is organized into four major areas: Family Health Services, Health Promotion Services, Disease Prevention and Control, and Emergency Preparedness and Response.

- In August 2016, Dakota County Public Health was awarded national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board. This accreditation is effective for five years.

Expenditures and funding
- The Dakota County Public Health Department expenditures in 2015 were $9.3 million. This represents a seven percent increase in spending from 2014.

- In 2015, state and federal funds accounted for the largest portion of funding (60 percent), followed by local tax levy (22 percent).

- Reimbursements from Medicaid and private insurance accounted for eight percent of the funding. Ten percent of funding is Local Public Health Act dollars from the state general fund.
Overview of Public Health services

- In 2015, 66 percent of Dakota County Public Health clients were people of color, in contrast to the general population of the county in which 20 percent are racially or ethnically diverse.
- The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program is a U.S. Department of Agriculture program designed to help keep low-income women, infants, and children up to age five healthy. Dakota County Public Health served 10,246 WIC clients in 2015.
- Public Health nurses conducted home visits for 1,186 clients (mothers and children) in 2015. An additional 405 clients were visited through the Dakota Healthy Families program, part of the Metro Alliance for Healthy Families.
- Dakota County Public Health partners with 89 coalitions and collaborative groups to support health in the community.
- Public health nurses gave 1,615 immunizations in 2015.
- Dakota County Public Health develops plans, conducts exercises, and collaborates with other federal, state and local agencies to prepare for emergencies.
- Dakota County Public Health supports five school districts in the county to improve the food environment to promote healthier eating and increase physical activity.
- The Dakota County Communities for a Lifetime Initiative engages community members and leaders proactively in preparing for an increase in older residents. The goal is to create a network of accessible communities that enables all residents to have active and vital lifestyles.

Workforce

- In 2015, Dakota County Public Health had 89.66 filled and contracted full-time equivalents (FTEs), an increase of three percent from 2014.
- Nine percent of the Dakota County Public Health workforce in 2015 was racially or ethnically diverse. This compares to 20 percent of the county population that is racially or ethnically diverse.
- Each year, more than 60 students from a number of colleges and universities learn about public health and gain clinical experience at Dakota County Public Health.

About this Community Health Profile
For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, contact: Melanie Countryman, Epidemiologist (melanie.countryman@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-554-6131).

For more information:
- Local Public Health Association of Minnesota http://lpha-mn.org/
- National Association of County and City Health Officials www.naccho.org
- Minnesota Department of Health www.health.state.mn.us