

# **Northeast Missouri Regional Health Assessment Project - 2005 (RHAP-05)**

*Conducted by the  
Northeast Missouri Rural Health Network  
and the  
Truman State University  
Division of Health & Exercise Science  
Program Planning & Evaluation Class*

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*"Piecing Together a Better Health Solution"*  
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# Acknowledgements

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## Background

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The Northeast Missouri Rural Health Network (NMRHN) is a non-profit corporation comprised of 45 member agencies representing all types of rural health care providers and educators. The ongoing mission of the NMRHN is to improve health services, promote community health awareness, and facilitate low-cost continuing education for local health care providers through a collaborative, non-competitive venue. The needs of underserved populations have been a primary concern of NMRHN since its inception in 1998. The aim of the Network is to achieve regional health improvements through collaboration, coordination, as well as sharing of services and resources among its member agencies. More information is available regarding the Network and its project on the NMRHN website ([www.nmrhn.org](http://www.nmrhn.org)).

In the spring of 2003, members of the NMRHN evaluated membership needs in order to advance the Network toward collaborative project planning and implementation – particularly as it relates to the region’s deficient health care services. While health care providers collect and report information regarding agency service utilization (e.g. emergency room visits, immunizations, births, communicable disease outbreaks, etc.) and the State of Missouri provides additional statistical reporting (e.g. demographics, socio-economic status, high school graduation rates, etc.), we find a lack of consistent and aggregate data across the region. In many of the more rural counties considerable responsibility is placed on health departments to provide a picture of community health. In most cases, these agencies are only able to evaluate and report the minimum criteria required by various state contracts. Most generally, these assessments are conducted within the confines of county lines and population pockets.

The NMRHN established a Regional Health Assessment Task Force responsible for seeking resources (labor, financial support, in-kind contributions) for conducting a multi-county assessment. The Missouri Foundation for Health provided financial resources to conduct the project. The NMRHN and Truman State University, Division of Health & Exercise Science partnered to develop a labor force for managing the project. Member agencies of NMRHN, particularly the local public health departments, communicated with the public about the survey.

It is intended that the results of this assessment will be utilized by a variety of local and regional health care providers, local governments, community health educators, community action groups, and others to (a) determine health status of the region, (b) identify and assess trends, and (c) coordinate community program planning and implementation to solve endemic health concerns in Northeast Missouri.