



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Kent County Health Department Honored for Excellence in Public Health KCHD is 1 of only 3 in U.S. to Win Multiple Awards

**GRAND RAPIDS** – The Kent County Health Department has been awarded two Model Practice Awards at the 2017 Annual Conference of the National Association for County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The award celebrates local health departments for developing programs that demonstrate best practices in response to a critical local public health need. KCHD’s Sexual Assault Prevention Action Team (SAPAT) and the Academic Health Department have both been selected to receive NACCHO’s prestigious Model Practice Award. Only 40 other local health departments received a Model Practice award. Aside from Kent County, only two other local health departments won two.

The SAPAT program is a coalition of local professionals that work in public health, social service, education, sexual assault services, counseling, advocacy and law enforcement. SAPAT is a multi-level intervention that includes prevention and policy change strategies to prevent sexual violence among youth ages 12-24.

KCHD’s Academic Health Department is an internship program that was created in 2015 to ensure a mutually beneficial experience for both interns and staff. Students can select projects that they feel best suits their needs and interests. The program has resulted in greater learning experiences for students and allows staff to focus energies on more immediate tasks while still making demonstrable progress on long range projects.

“Any local health department would be proud to receive NACCHO’s Model Practice Award,” says Adam London, Administrative Health Officer at KCHD. “Being awarded two is evidence that the commitment to developing innovative and responsive programs extends to the core of our culture.”

Since 2003, NACCHO’s Model Practice Awards have honored programs, resources, and tools that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health challenges. Each innovative project was peer-reviewed and selected from a competitive group of over 100 applicants.

**KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit [www.accesskent.com/health](http://www.accesskent.com/health).**

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"This award puts the Kent County Health Department in special company with a select group of health departments that exemplify a forward-thinking, proactive approach toward protecting and promoting the health of communities nationwide," said NACCHO Interim Executive Director and Chief of Government Affairs Laura Hanen, MPP.

The SAPAT and the Academic Health Department programs are now part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas that range from immunization and maternal and child health, to infectious diseases and emergency preparedness.

The NACCHO Model Practice database allows local health departments, public health partners, and other important stakeholders to learn about the work being done by local health departments across the country. The database also provides users an opportunity to learn from best practices and what resources are needed to implement comparable programs in other jurisdictions that produce results.

Read more about these award-winning programs at <https://application.naccho.org/Public/Applications/Search> .

**About the National Association of County and City Health Officials**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's 2,800 local governmental health departments. These cities, counties, metropolitan, district and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities.

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