



**For Immediate Release**

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## **New Online Resource Gives Hundreds of U.S. Cities Access to Key Neighborhood-Level Health Data to Create Thriving Communities**

*Data reveal disparities in school attendance, income inequality, and other drivers of health within and across cities*

**New York, NY, May 15**—The [City Health Dashboard](#)—an online resource with community-level health, social and economic data for the nation’s 500 largest cities—was launched today by the Department of Population Health at NYU School of Medicine with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and in partnership with NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, the National Resource Network, ICMA, and the National League of Cities. This online resource enables local leaders to identify and take action around the most pressing health needs in their cities and communities.

The Dashboard reports on 36 key measures of health, such as obesity and opioid overdose deaths, as well as the conditions that influence health such as housing affordability, third grade reading proficiency, and income inequality. It represents a first-of-its-kind effort to provide city- and neighborhood-level data from multiple national sources--creating a one-stop online resource to help city leaders and residents pinpoint and take action on gaps in health and opportunity. The City Health Dashboard gives users the ability to view many of its measures according to race and gender. The Dashboard also allows users to compare their city to others and provides resources for best practices and policies, creating an opportunity to explore how to address specific challenges.

The City Health Dashboard data offer a revealing look at how health outcomes and opportunities for health vary widely depending on where you live. For example, City Health Dashboard researchers found that chronic absenteeism—missing 15 days or more of the school year—is higher for the 500 cities included in the Dashboard than for the United States as a whole. The Dashboard’s data also show that students of color have a higher rate of chronic absenteeism overall. Black and Hispanic students are 29 percent and 16 percent, respectively, more likely to be chronically absent from school than their white peers living in the same city. Regionally, the West has the lowest rate of absences, while the Northeast has the highest rate. This is a critical national problem that puts millions of children at risk for falling behind academically and dropping out of school, which can lead to serious long-term health, employment and financial consequences.

“With the City Health Dashboard, cities across the country can leverage the power of data to improve people’s lives and strengthen communities,” said Marc Gourevitch, MD, MPH, chair of the Department

of Population Health at NYU School of Medicine and the program's principal architect. "There's a saying: 'what gets measured is what gets done.' Only with local data can community leaders understand where actionable gaps in opportunity exist and target programs and policy changes to address them."

Other findings from the City Health Dashboard include:

- **Health behaviors and conditions vary widely between cities.** For instance, the prevalence of smoking ranges from less than 12 percent among adults in the 50 cities with the lowest rates, to 25 percent or more in the cities with the highest rates. In the 50 cities with the lowest diabetes rates, less than 7 percent of adults have diabetes, while in the 50 cities with the highest rates, 14 percent or more of adults have the condition.
- **Economic opportunities for children vary greatly between cities:** Poverty and other economic stressors pose risks to the health of communities, and substantial variation exists between cities. For instance, while only 3 percent of children live in poverty in the wealthiest cities, greater than 60 percent of children are below poverty in the most deprived cities.
- **Cities in the West consistently have better health:** On average, cities in the West have lower rates of obesity, hypertension, and diabetes compared to cities in other regions and the U.S. as a whole.

"We all have a role to play in improving well-being in our communities and ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities to be healthy, no matter where they live," said Abbey Cofsky, MPH, RWJF Managing Director, Program. "With city and neighborhood-specific data, community leaders, city officials, and advocates now have a clearer picture of the biggest local challenges they face, and are better positioned to drive change."

Overseen by a team of population health and urban policy experts, epidemiologists, and geographic information system specialists, the City Health Dashboard website displays measures and drivers of health through interactive maps, tables and charts. The nation's 500 largest cities –those with populations of about 66,000 or above - can use the site to target their efforts to improve the well-being of residents by comparing outcomes with peer cities, and across their own neighborhoods to guide local solutions. The Dashboard also compiles best practices and resources for driving change across communities. Data presented on the Dashboard are drawn from federal, state and other datasets that adhere to rigorous standards of data collection and analysis, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Dashboard was piloted in 2017 in four cities—Flint, Michigan; Kansas City, Kansas; Providence, Rhode Island; and Waco, Texas. To view and explore the City Health Dashboard data, visit: [www.cityhealthdashboard.com](http://www.cityhealthdashboard.com).

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### **About the Department of Population Health at NYU School of Medicine**

The Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health unites the fields of medicine and public health to improve the health of populations in New York City and around the globe and to educate students to become leaders in healthcare delivery, health policy, and public health. Partnering with colleagues at NYU School of Medicine, NYU Langone Health, NYU Langone Hospital – Brooklyn, Bellevue Hospital, and diverse community and private sector organizations, the Department conducts basic and applied research to improve the quality and effectiveness of healthcare and to prevent and better manage disease. Trained in diverse disciplines, the Department's more than 70 core faculty and 200 dedicated staff specialize in research areas including: healthcare delivery science, health economics and policy, epidemiology, biostatistics, medical ethics, early childhood development, community health and health equity, decision science, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug use prevention and treatment. Visit us at [med.nyu.edu/pophealth](http://med.nyu.edu/pophealth).

### **About NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service**

Since 1938, NYU Wagner has been educating the world's future public service leaders to translate ideas into actions that have an effective and lasting impact on the public good. Our faculty's research changes the way people frame, understand, and act on important public issues. We provide our students with critical skills, access to all that New York City has to offer, and a deep understanding of context surrounding public service challenges—which they use to improve cities and communities across the globe. We offer a Master of Public Administration in Public & Nonprofit Management & Policy, Master of Public Administration in Health Policy & Management, Master of Urban Planning, Master of Science in Public Policy, Executive Master of Public Administration, and PhD in Public Administration.

### **About Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are working with others to build a national Culture of Health enabling everyone in America to live longer, healthier lives. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org). Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [www.rwjf.org/twitter](http://www.rwjf.org/twitter) or on Facebook at [www.rwjf.org/facebook](http://www.rwjf.org/facebook).

### **About the National Resource Network**

The National Resource Network (the Network) develops and delivers innovative solutions to American cities to help them address their toughest economic challenges. The Network works with local leaders to identify practical solutions, share real-world expertise and best practices, and help cities develop the tools and strategies they need to grow their economies.

Initially funded with \$10 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Network designed an innovative approach that leverages the expertise, partnerships, and resources of the public and private sectors to help cities comprehensively tackle their most pressing challenges. The Network provides cities with customized tools and advice to build strategic partnerships, strengthen their economic competitiveness, and marshal public and private sector resources.

**About ICMA**

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) focuses on creating and supporting thriving communities by working with our more than 11,000 members to identify and speed the adoption of leading local government practices in order to improve the lives of residents. ICMA provides its membership with a variety of tools, professional development opportunities, research, publications, data and information, technical assistance, and training. Working in partnership with organizations such as NYU and programs like the National Resource Network, ICMA helps develop and support technical assistance programs and platform-based services. Learn more about ICMA work at [icma.org](https://www.icma.org).

**About the National League of Cities**

The National League of Cities is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans. The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, a special entity within the National League of Cities, helps municipal leaders take action on behalf of the children, youth, and families in their communities.