



# Public Health Practice in Kansas

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**Background:** To determine the scope of public health practice in the state of Kansas, public health practitioners were asked about their contributions to public health in their communities. In the media, the role of public health is poorly and inaccurately communicated to the public. Often, public health efforts are only recognized on a national scale. Interviewing local public health practitioners in Kansas demonstrated their contributions to public health, which may be more tangible to the public and other audiences. These interviews will be utilized to write a narrative to communicate the journeys, concerns, and beliefs from the public health perspective.

**Methods:** To date, 13 of 92 public health practitioners from 12 counties have been interviewed about their contributions to public health in their community. Practitioners were asked about their biggest perceived barrier to public health, and if they utilized communication strategies for diverse audiences.

**Discussion:** The public health practitioners believed public health education should begin earlier in the educational system. All practitioners perceived a lack of public knowledge about public health programs, public health funding deficits in certain communities, and what public health was as a profession. The practitioners did not observe a difference between gender or gender identity, except that most programs offered are aimed towards women and children, which could be due to a lack of data collected for that population.

Themes	Responses	Number of Providers
Slip through cracks, homeless, addicts	9	6
Funding	7	4
Education	11	6
Funding/Education	8	6
Expand Medicaid	4	2
Minorities/ International populations	17	12
Impoverished	12	8
Elderly	12	7
Children	1	1
Elderly/Children	2	2
Support Public Health in Early Education in Schools	13	13
Disability	5	3
Accessibility/ Affordability of Health Care	5	4
Nutrition	8	5
Transportation	7	5