



## Johnson County Government Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Johnson County Department of Health and Environment Honored for Excellence in Public Health

### *Public Health Emergency Program wins two national "Model Practice Awards" in 2012*

JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS (July 13, 2012) – Johnson County Department of Health and Environment's (JCDHE) Public Health Emergency Program was honored at the 2012 annual conference of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), a body of peers, for developing and implementing two programs that demonstrate exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a local public health need. The department's **Technical Assistance Review (TAR) Assignment, Documentation and Tracking Tool** and **Dispense Assist** were two of 39 public health programs developed by a local health department and selected from across the nation to receive NACCHO's Model Practice Award.

The first award was for the development of a system to manage and organize a local health department's Technical Assistance Review (TAR). A TAR contains hundreds of detailed documents outlining a local health department's plans for managing a public health emergency. The federal government requires local health departments to submit these documents annually for a thorough review and score. A minimum score is required to continue to receive regional funding. Organizing and managing all of these documents prior to submission is crucial to earning a passing score. Since developing and using this tool, JCDHE has received scores of 100 percent the last two years.

The second award was for the creation of [Dispense Assist](#), an easy-to-use online tool used by local health departments, hospitals and health care providers to screen individuals during public health emergencies and seasonal/pandemic influenza. This no-cost tool streamlines dispensing/vaccination operations and is already being implemented in public health jurisdictions, hospitals and other health care entities in Kansas, Missouri, Oregon, Maine, Nebraska, Utah and Michigan.

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“We are proud to receive two of NACCHO’s Model Practice Awards. These awards are evidence of our commitment to developing responsive and innovative public health programs that improve the health of local residents,” said Lougene Marsh, JCDHE director.

Each innovative project receiving the award was peer-reviewed (by other local health department professionals) and selected from a group of 166 applications. Since 2003, NACCHO’s Model Practice Awards program has honored initiatives—including programs, resources, and tools—that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health concerns. Both Dispense Assist and the TAR tool are now part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas ranging from immunization and maternal and child health to infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. The NACCHO Model Practice database allows users to benefit from colleagues' experiences, to learn what works, and to ensure that resources are used wisely on effective programs that have been implemented with good results. It also enables NACCHO to share information with key stakeholders and media about the good work being done by local health departments across the country.

This award puts JCDHE into special company—a select group of health departments that exemplify a forward thinking, proactive attitude toward protecting and promoting the health of communities across the nation.

More information about Dispense Assist can be found at [www.dispenseassist.com](http://www.dispenseassist.com). Copies of JCDHE’s TAR tool can be obtained by calling 913-477-8343. For more information about the NACCHO Model Practice Awards and to view a list of other award winners, go to [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).

### **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 city, county, metropolitan, district and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities.

### **About Johnson County**

Nestled in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 544,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. Johnson County offers a vibrant quality of life including nationally recognized schools, libraries and parks where businesses and families choose to locate and call their home. For more information visit the county’s website at [www.jocogov.org](http://www.jocogov.org).



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