

# **A Health Needs Assessment Study of the Minority Population in Kosciusko County**

**by the**

**Indiana Minority Health Coalition**

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## Executive Summary

This report presents results of a community health needs assessment for minority populations in Kosciusko County, directed by the Indiana Minority Health Coalition with technical assistance from the Indiana University Bowen Research Center. Initial project planning activities began in 2003, with most of the data collected in 2004. The purpose of this needs assessment study is to:

- Perform a comprehensive, community-based health needs assessment of minority populations in Kosciusko County
- Identify the real and perceived health-related issues of minority groups across age, gender, socio-economic, and geographic categories
- Examine the wide spectrum of factors impacting the health and well being of the minority populations in the Kosciusko County
- Identify opportunities and initiatives to better meet the health needs

Data for the health needs assessment were collected from existing data containing health indicators and targeted population surveys.

Existing data from birth and death certificates were gathered and analyzed for minority groups. The analysis of these existing data for Kosciusko County indicated that disparities exist by race and ethnic group. It also revealed that most rates need to be improved to meet the Healthy People 2010 Objectives. The Hispanic population in Kosciusko County is disproportionately affected when comparing the health indicators among racial groups.

Targeted surveys were developed and administered to forty-four (44) local residents in a variety of settings (i.e. churches, community centers, ethnic food markets, grocery stores, health fairs, neighborhood events, and retail stores) to obtain community input on important health issues, needs, values, and beliefs. The results from the surveys highlighted that Hispanics perceive diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, high cholesterol, and substance abuse as part of the top five worst health problems in their neighborhood. These results indicated that twenty-eight percent of Hispanics indicated they had difficulty obtaining the services of a doctor, nurse or other health professional in the past year. For Hispanics, the top five barriers attributed to accessing healthcare included: lack of money, lack of insurance, language barriers, medical care not covered by insurance, and lack of transportation.