



Blaine County Health Department  
Creating a State of Health

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## Joint Council on Public Health Established

### Public Health Leaders Act on Commission Recommendation

**Oklahoma City, Okla.** – Public health leaders from the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), OKC-County Health Department and Tulsa Health Department have announced the creation of the Joint Council on Public Health. Last month, the Joint Commission on Public Health, created by Governor Fallin’s Executive Order and chaired by OKC-County Health Department executive director Gary Cox, submitted final recommendations to the governor. One of those recommendations was the creation of the Joint Council.

“We are grateful for the work put in by so many to identify opportunities to strengthen our public health system,” said Interim Commissioner of Health Tom Bates. “However, a report is only as good as those that are implementing it, which is why forming the Joint Council is a priority.”

This group will review health data, plan health initiatives, prioritize services, develop private/public partnerships, evaluate outcomes and look at per capita public health spending.

“Although we are faced with many barriers in our current state system, we have realized progress in a multitude of public health programs and partnerships, and can build on that with outward focused initiatives and innovative approaches to improve health and wellness for our entire state,” says Gary Cox. “We will take the framework provided by the Joint Commission and establish forward thinking and transparent systems for the way critical public health services are delivered.”

The Joint Council will consist of Tom Bates, Interim Commissioner of Health, Gunnar McFadden, OSDH Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Community and Family Health and Interim Regional Director for Canadian, Kingfisher and Logan Counties, Gary Cox, OKC-County Health Department executive director, and Dr. Bruce Dart, Tulsa Health Department executive director.

“By pulling together representatives of the public health system in Oklahoma to act in unison, we will be able to take key steps in stabilizing and moving our state forward in health improvements to serve Oklahomans in a meaningful way,” said Bates.

The Council will begin meeting immediately to review current systems and further align recommendations with actions. These will be taken to the State Board of Health for review and consideration. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/2GLPavG>.

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