

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR TIM BURCHETT



# MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nov. 17, 2015

## **KCHD awarded National Accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board**

*First health department in state to achieve accreditation*

*Knoxville, Tenn.* – The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national, voluntary accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The national accreditation program works to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of the nation’s Tribal, state, local and territorial public health departments. KCHD is one of only 96 health departments in the country to achieve national accreditation.

“This designation demonstrates that our health department is, as I’ve said before, one of the best in the country. I am extremely proud of Dr. Buchanan and all of the health department employees,” said Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. “With this achievement, they are demonstrating increased accountability and credibility to the people of Knox County.”

The national accreditation program, jointly supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, sets standards against which the nation’s more than 3,000 governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures.

"PHAB accreditation is a reflection of the dedication of our staff, who work every day to protect the health and improve the lives of everyone in Knox County. Our intention in seeking accreditation is about doing the right things for the right reasons," said KCHD Director Dr. Martha Buchanan. "I am grateful for our staff and community partners who supported, and continue to support, our efforts toward achieving and maintaining accreditation."

The national accreditation program was created collaboratively over a 10-year period by hundreds of public health practitioners working at the national, Tribal, state and local levels. Since the program’s launch in September 2011, hundreds of public health departments have applied to PHAB for accreditation, and hundreds of public health practitioners from across the nation have been trained to serve as volunteer peer site visitors for the program.



“Whenever you see the seal of accreditation, you will know that the Knox County Health Department has been rigorously examined and meets or exceeds national standards that promote continuous quality improvement for public health,” added Buchanan. “By continuing to improve our services and performance, we can be sure we are not only better prepared to respond to public health threats, but that we are meeting the public health needs of our community as effectively as possible.”

**About Knox County Health Department:**

The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is a governmental agency dedicated to making every person a healthy person. As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, KCHD’s mission is to encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices. The organization conducts disease surveillance, prevention and control; emergency preparedness; nutrition and physical activity promotion; tobacco use prevention; health equity promotion; immunizations; and much more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

**About the Public Health Accreditation Board**

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), established in 2007, was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body, and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, Tribal, state, and local levels. Learn more about PHAB or sign up for the PHAB e-newsletter by visiting [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org).

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